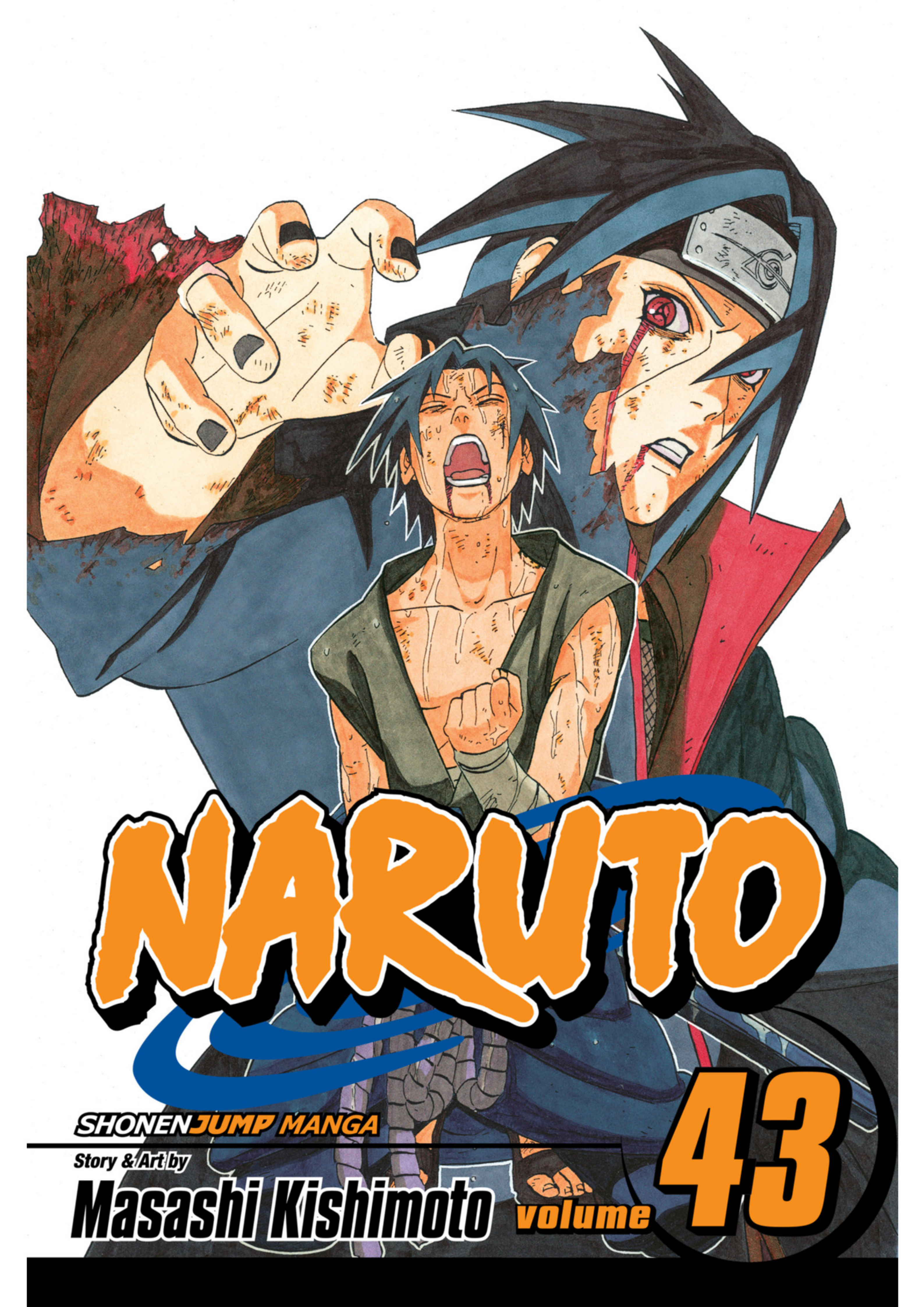
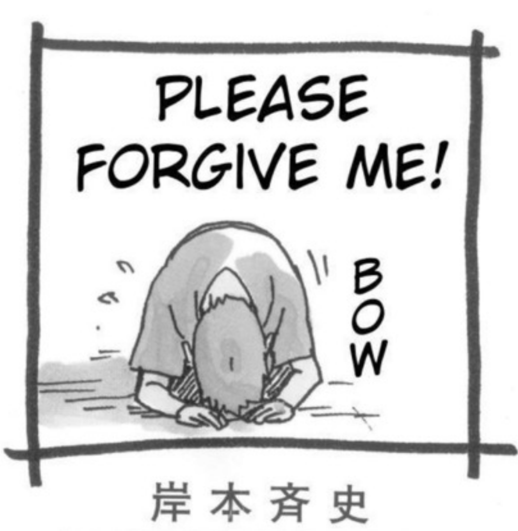
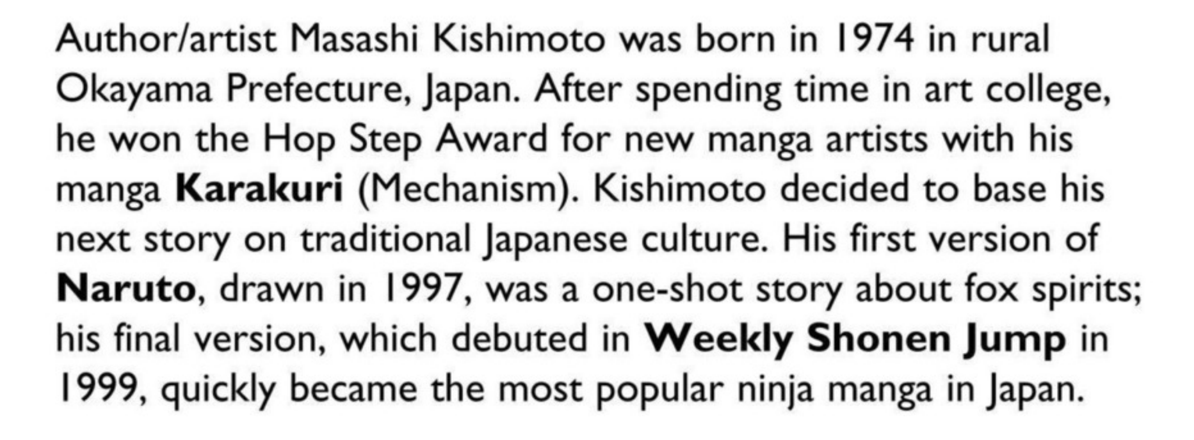

NARUTO
SHONENJUMP MANGA
Story & Art by
Masashi Kishimoto
volume
43





450 yen (with tax)...
I truly apologize for this affront. I had decided that this (241) was the right number of pages to bring you, the readers, the Sasuke vs. Itachi arc. But this resulted in the price of the tankobon [graphic novel] going up, for which I feel absolutely terrible. This volume is also a bit thicker, but I do hope that you will read it to the very end.

—Masashi Kishimoto, 2008



Author/artist Masashi Kishimoto was born in 1974 in rural Okayama Prefecture, Japan. After spending time in art college, he won the Hop Step Award for new manga artists with his manga **Karakuri** (Mechanism). Kishimoto decided to base his next story on traditional Japanese culture. His first version of **Naruto**, drawn in 1997, was a one-shot story about fox spirits; his final version, which debuted in **Weekly Shonen Jump** in 1999, quickly became the most popular ninja manga in Japan.

NARUTO VOL. 43
SHONEN JUMP Manga Edition

STORY AND ART BY MASASHI KISHIMOTO

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English Adaptation/Deric A. Hughes
Touch-up Art & Lettering/Inori Fukuda Trant
Design/Gerry Serrano
Editor/Joel Enos

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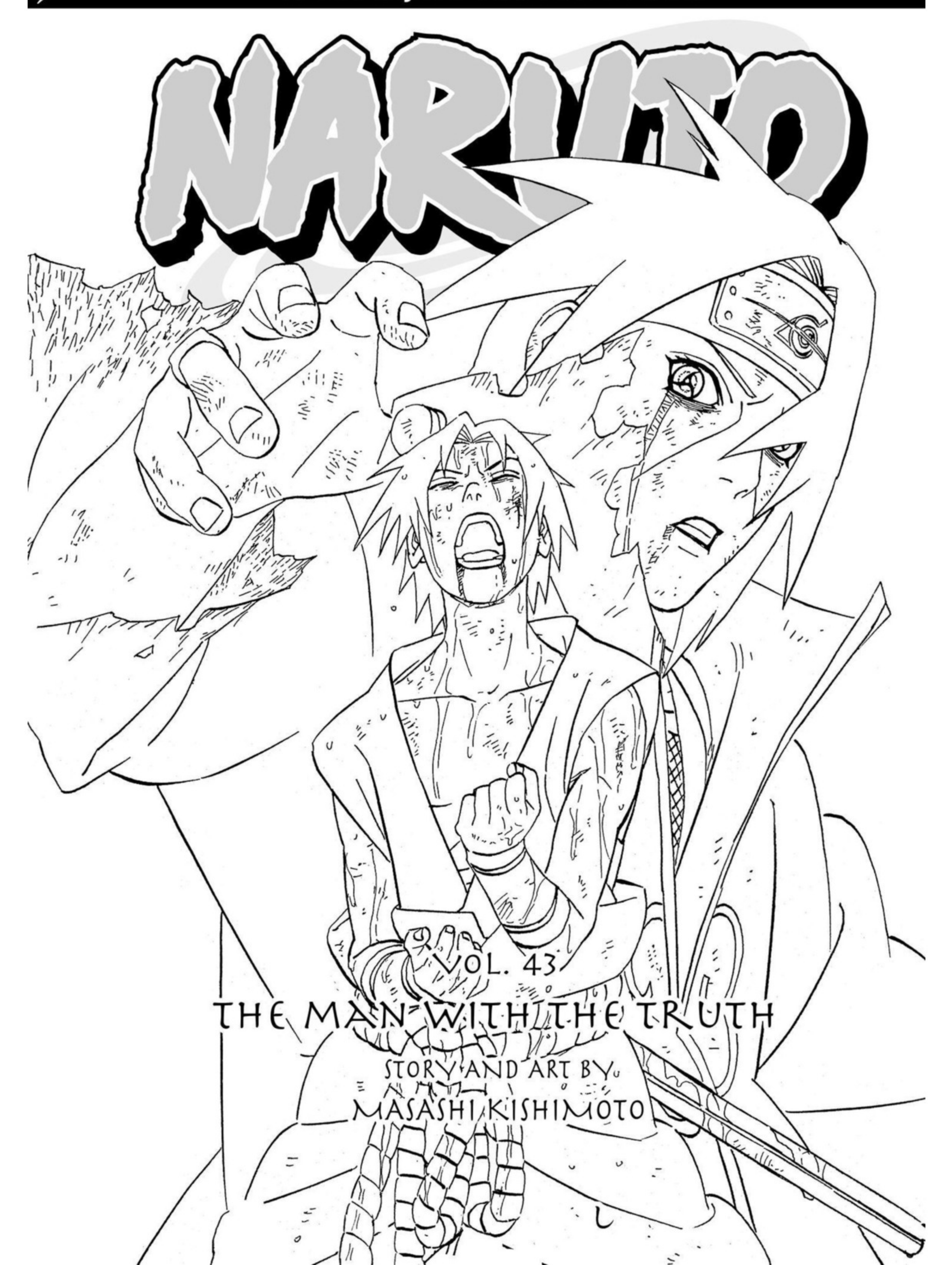
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First printing, April 2009
Second printing, November 2012







SHONEN JUMP MANGA EDITION



CHARACTERS





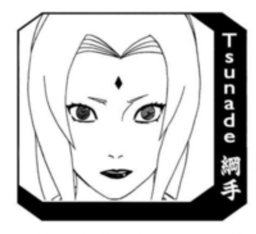


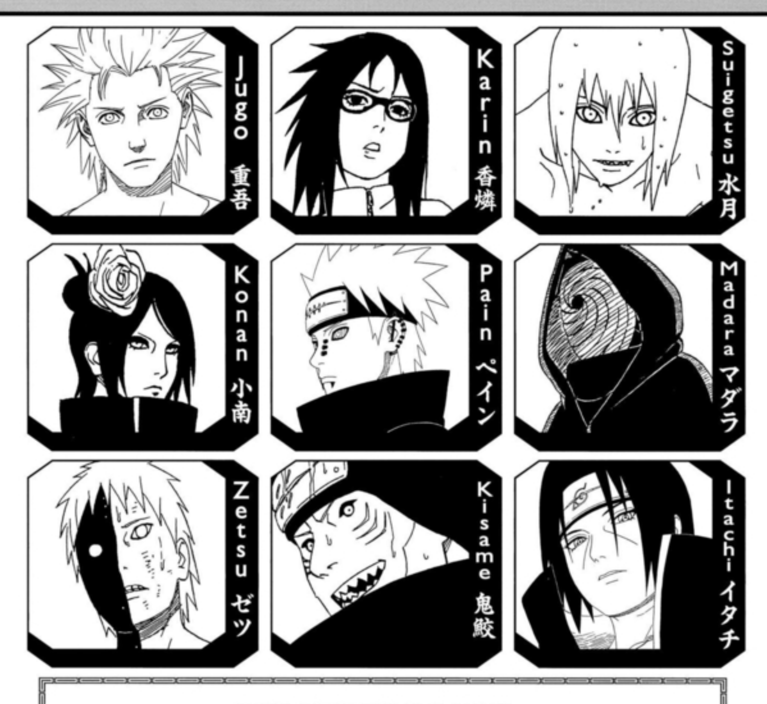












THE STORY SO FAR...

Once the bane of the Konohagakure Ninja Academy, Uzumaki Naruto now serves dutifully among the ranks of the Konoha shinobi—an illustrious group of ninja sworn to protect their village from the forces of evil seeking to destroy it from without and within…

However, Sasuke, unable to give up his quest for vengeance, leaves Konohagakure to seek Orochimaru and his power…

Two years pass. Naruto and his comrades grow up and head out once more. As their fierce battles against the Tailed Beast-targeting Akatsuki rage on, Sasuke rebels against Orochimaru and takes everything from him. Sasuke then gathers new companions and chases after Itachi. Jiraiya, the man who has trained Naruto for more than two years to deal with the impending attack of the Akatsuki, finally discovers the identity of the Akatsuki leader, Pain, and the secret is then bequeathed to Naruto—after Jiraiya's untimely death. Sasuke once again confronts his brother Itachi and learns not only about his brother's true intentions, but also about the Uchiha Clan's past. And to slake his vengeance, Sasuke challenges him to a battle. Confident that he can win, Sasuke appears to overpower and corner his brother… but then Itachi begins to unleash the full power of the Amaterasu…



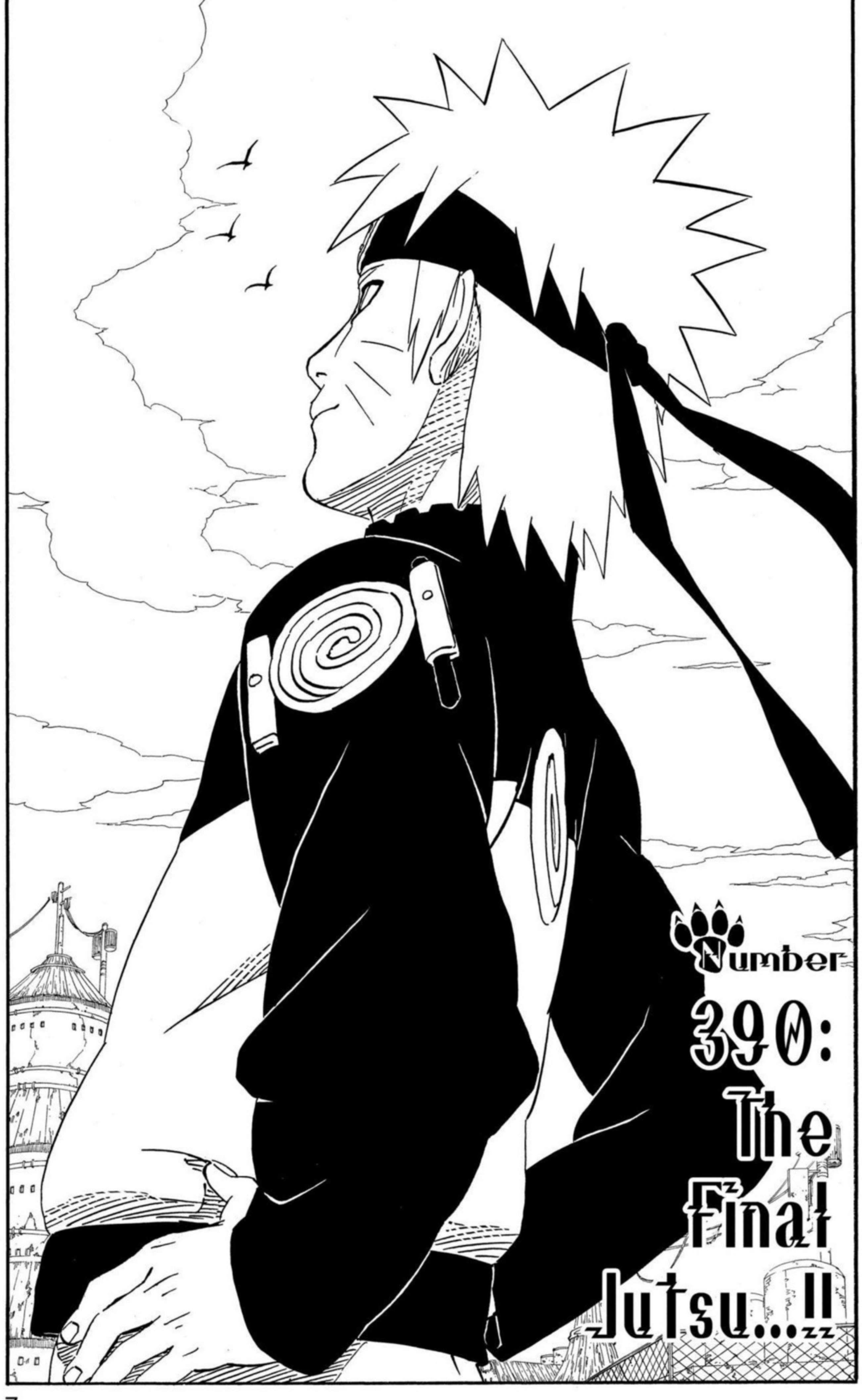
NARUTO

VOL. 43

THE MAN WITH THE TRUTH

CONTENTS

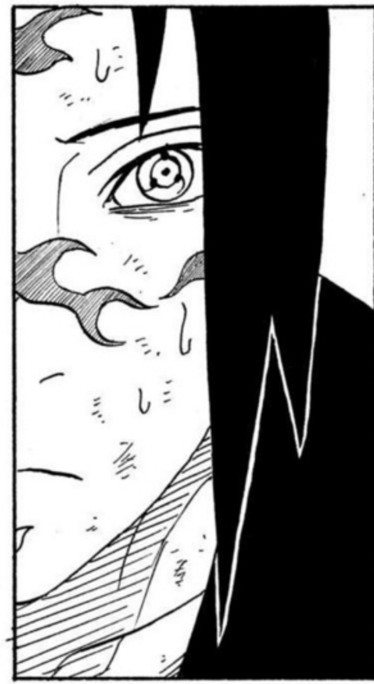



Number
390:
The
Final
Jutsu...!!

VWOOO
TOK
FWOOO...


READ
THIS
WAY


ONE NEEDS ONLY TO SIGHT ONE'S TARGET, AND THE BLACK FLAMES WILL COME TO LIFE RIGHT ON POINT.
W-WHOA... HE PUT OUT FLAMES WITH FLAMES!




QWISSH


HUF
THE BLACK FLAMES NEVER GO OUT UNTIL THEY HAVE BURNED THEIR TARGET TO ASH... EVEN IF THAT HAPPENS TO BE OTHER FLAMES!
HUF

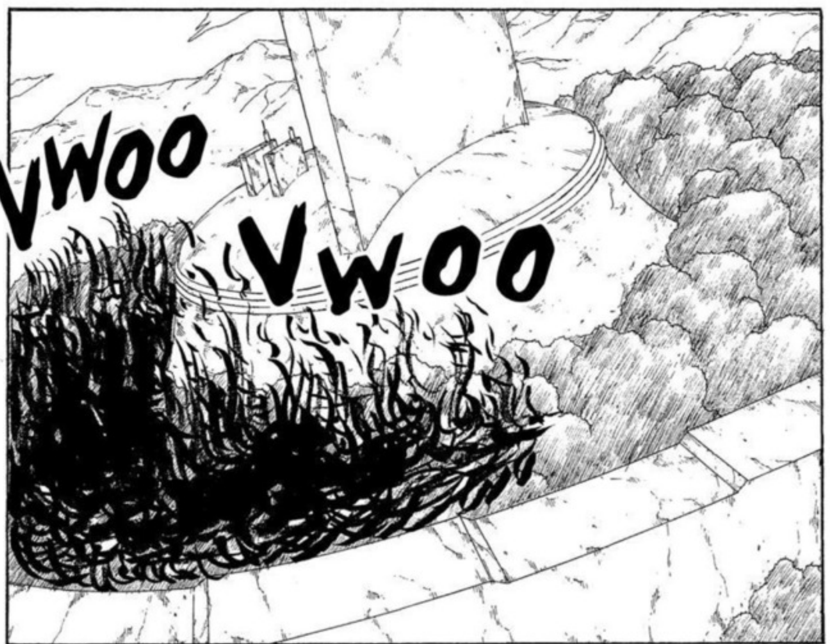

FZZ
SHH


SHH


VOOSH
VOOSH
VOOSH


FU
DO
SKRITCH!
!!
FWOOSH!
AARGH...
UGH!
TOK-SKRITCH!

READ THIS WAY















SQUELCH

SPUTTER SPUTTER...!!

!



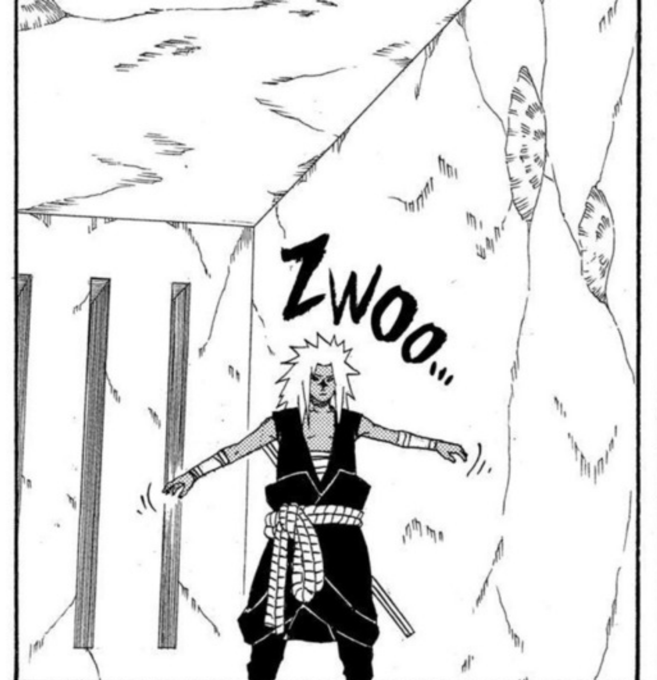



READ
THIS
WAY


UNTIL HE UN-LEASHES THE AMA-TERASU...
I CAN'T USE THE ART OF SUBSTI-TUTION.

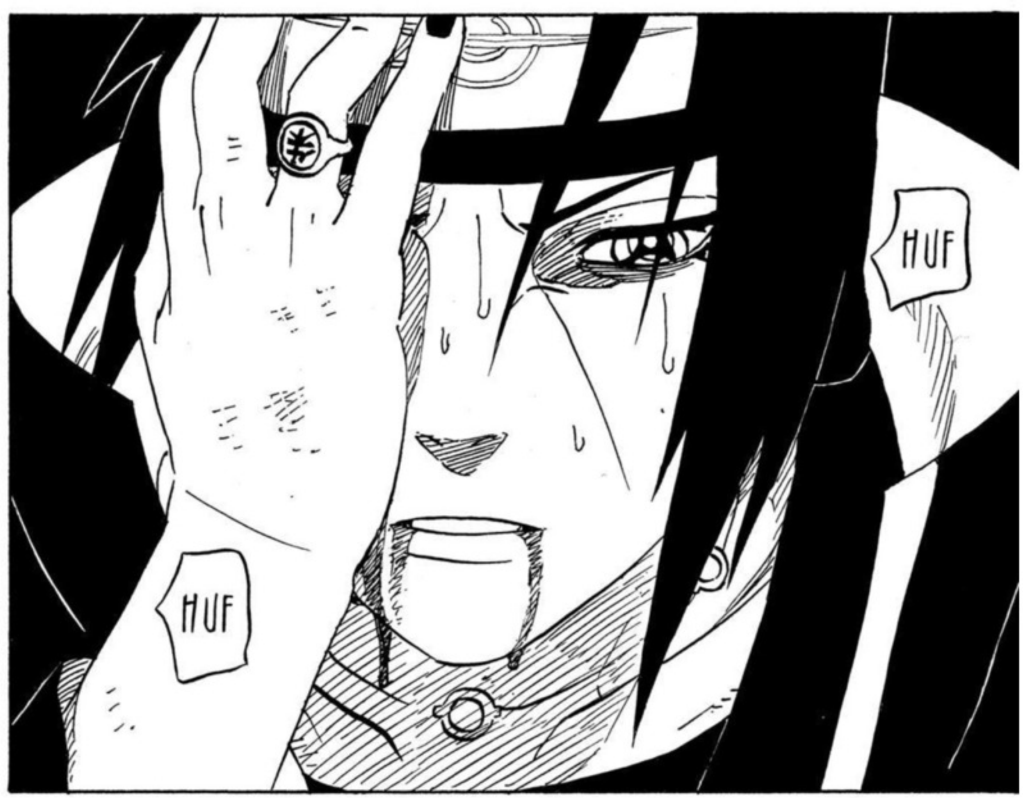

CHIRP CHIRP CHIRP


ZWOO...
THIS IS WHAT I'VE BEEN WAITING FOR!


ZWOO...


TAK


HACK HACK
SWOO...


HUF
HUF


!


FIRE STYLE! ART OF DRAGON FLAME!!
!
FWOOSH!!


SHWOO SHWOO
SCREECH
!
FUOOSH!
FUOOSH!
SHUP
KRAK KRAK KRAK KRAK KRAK

UGH...!

FWOOSH

BAKOOM!

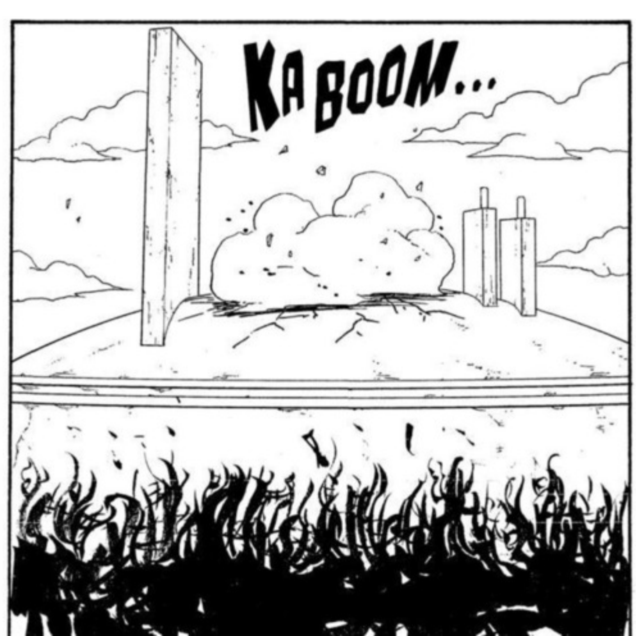
ZWOO...

WAH!

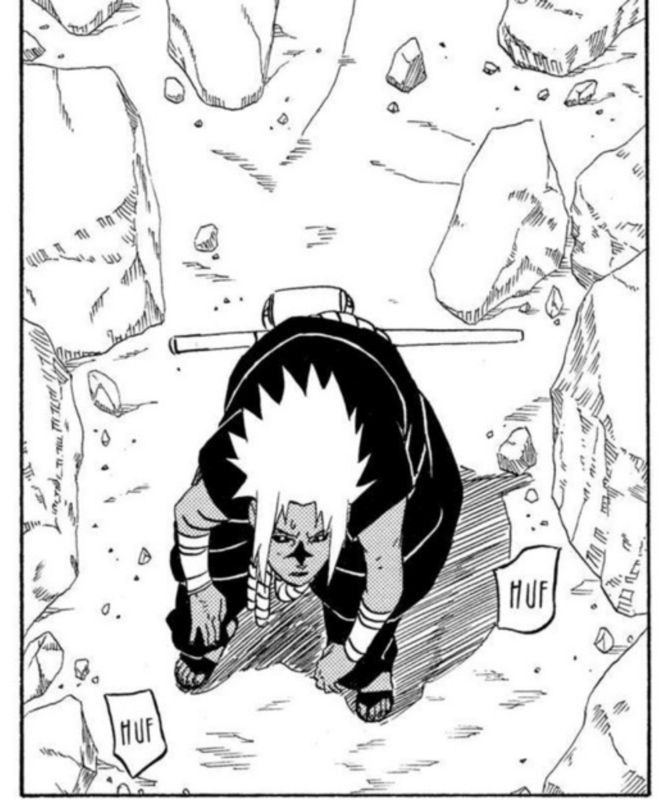
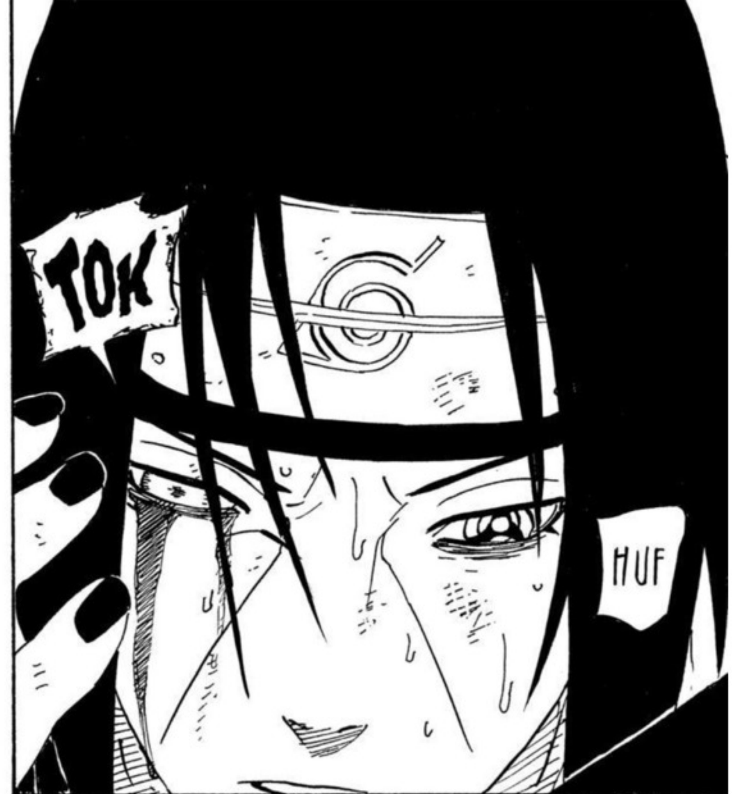
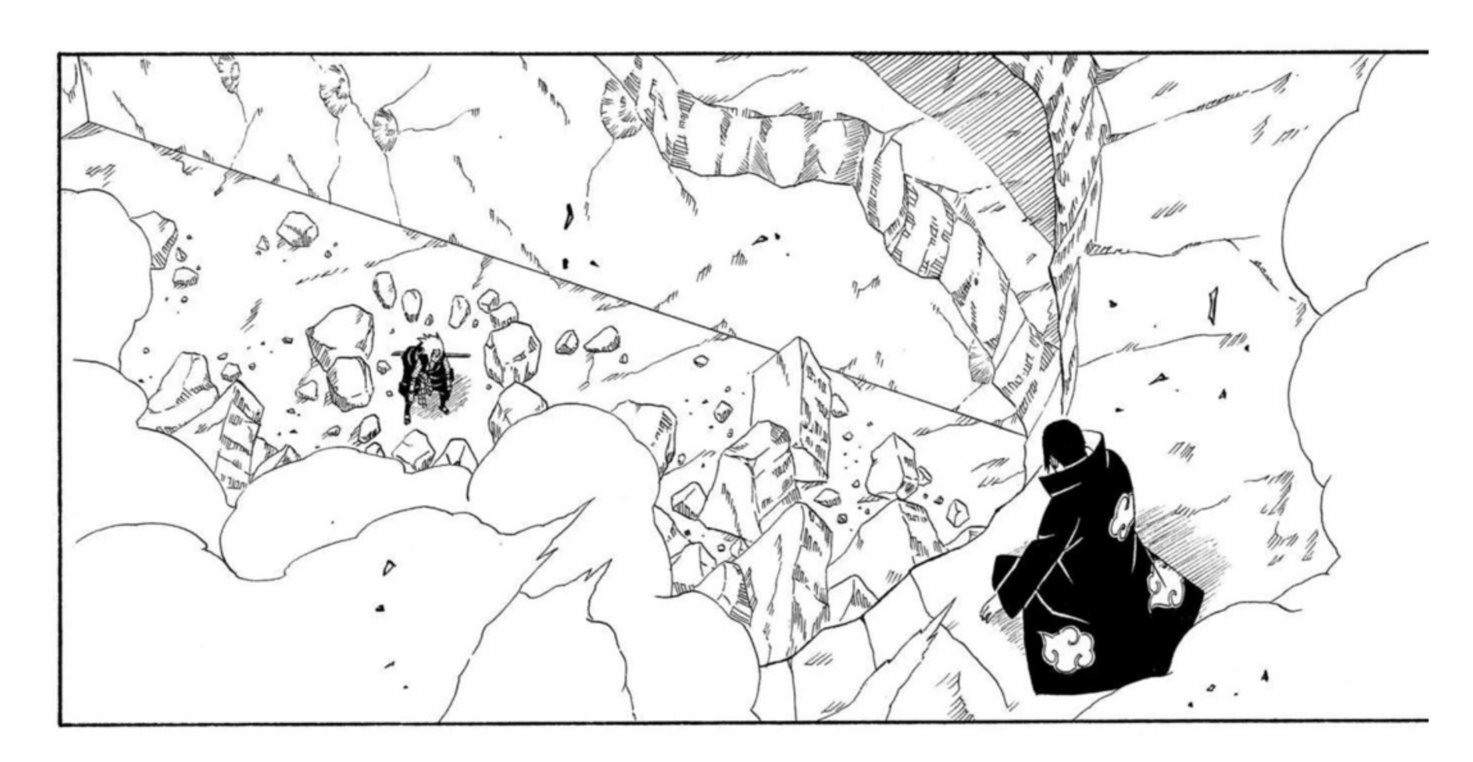
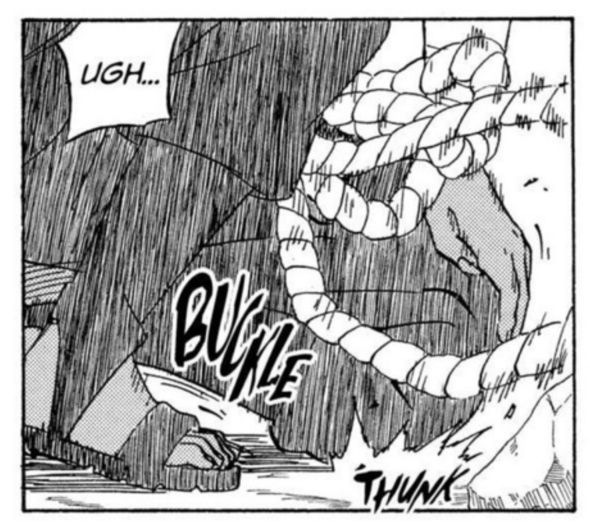
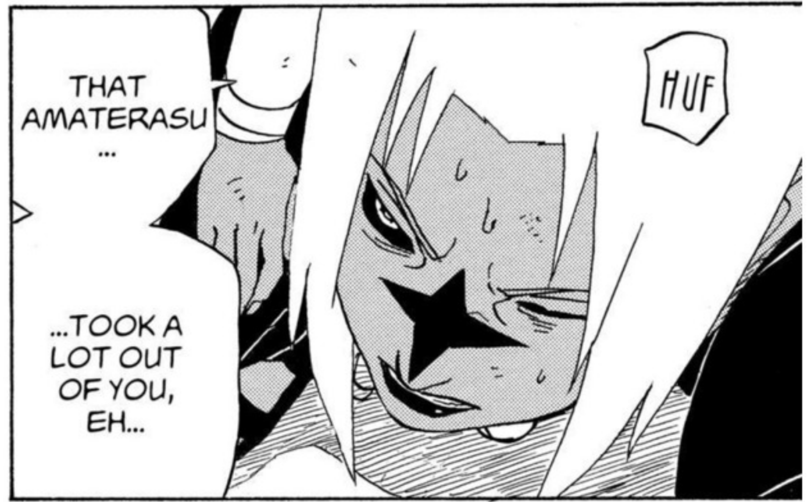
KRAK

KRAK

KRAK






HUF
HUF

TOK
HUF


UGH...
BUCKLE
THUNK

HUF
THAT AMATERASU ...
...TOOK A LOT OUT OF YOU, EH...









ZWOO

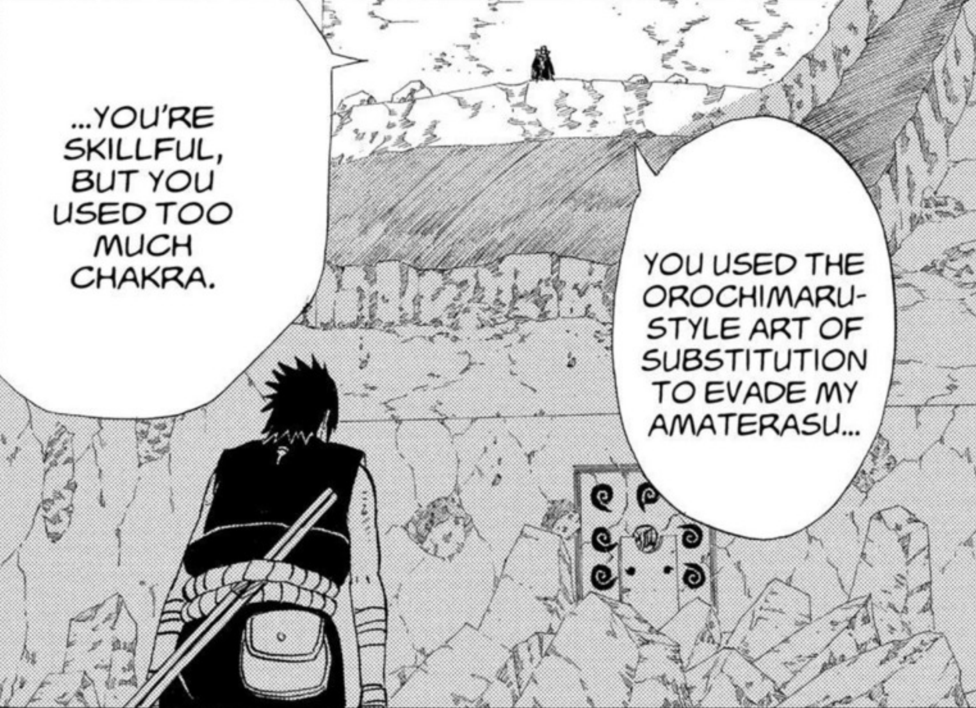
THIS WILL PROBABLY BE MY LAST JUTSU...





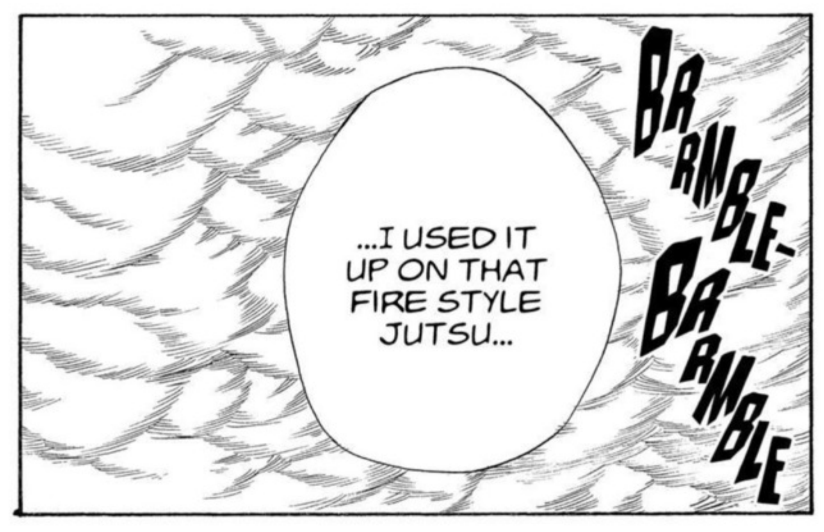

HUF
THE SHARINGAN CAN ASSESS CHAKRA.
HUF


SSH...
STOP BLUFF-ING...
I CAN SEE THAT YOU'RE OUT OF CHAKRA.


YOU USED THE OROCHIMARU-STYLE ART OF SUBSTITUTION TO EVADE MY AMATERASU...
...YOU'RE SKILLFUL, BUT YOU USED TOO MUCH CHAKRA.


I SEE... BECAUSE SASUKE HAS ABSORBED OROCHI-MARU...!
HUH...

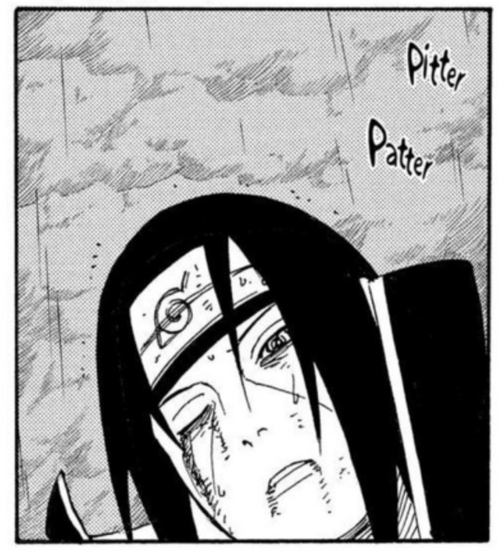

YEAH, I DON'T HAVE ANY CHAKRA LEFT...

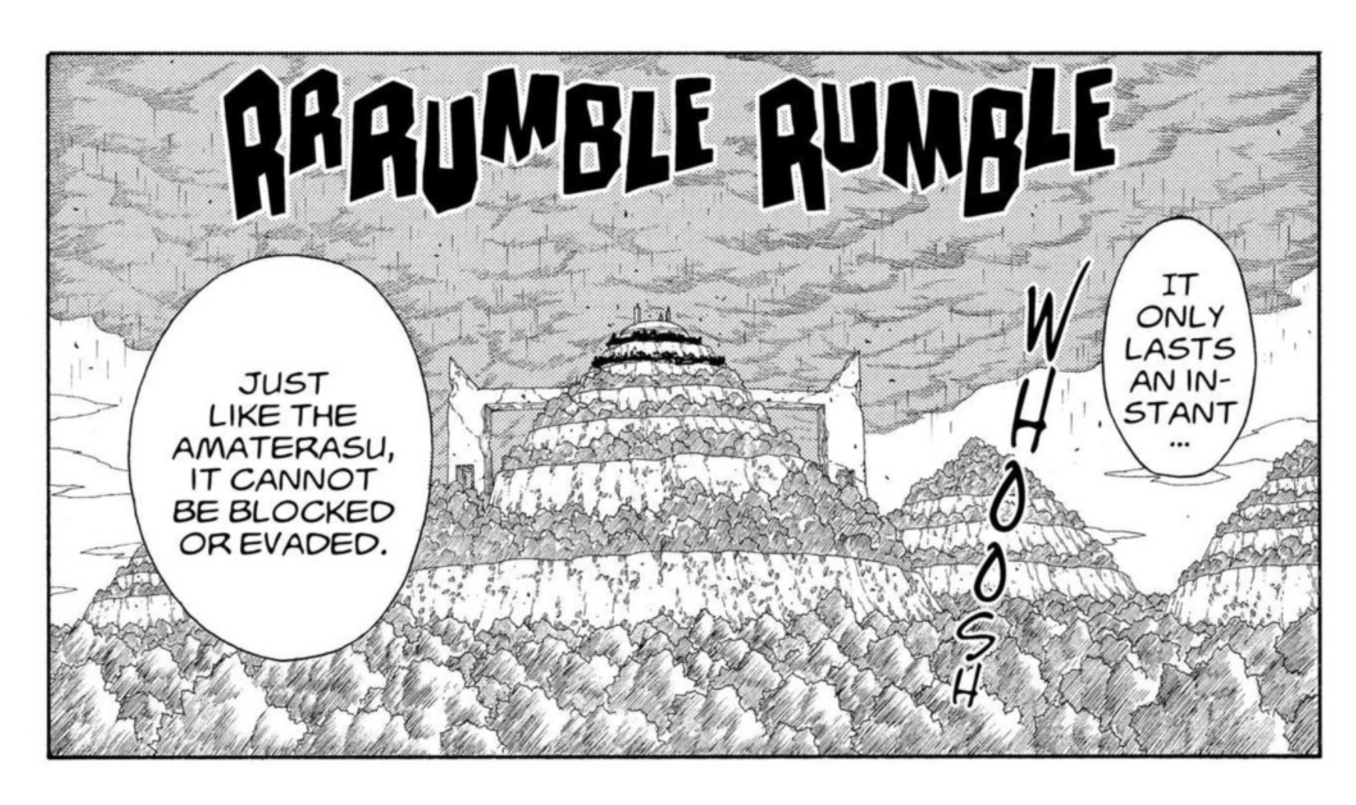

BRRMBLE-BRRMBLE
...I USED IT UP ON THAT FIRE STYLE JUTSU...


READ
THIS
WAY

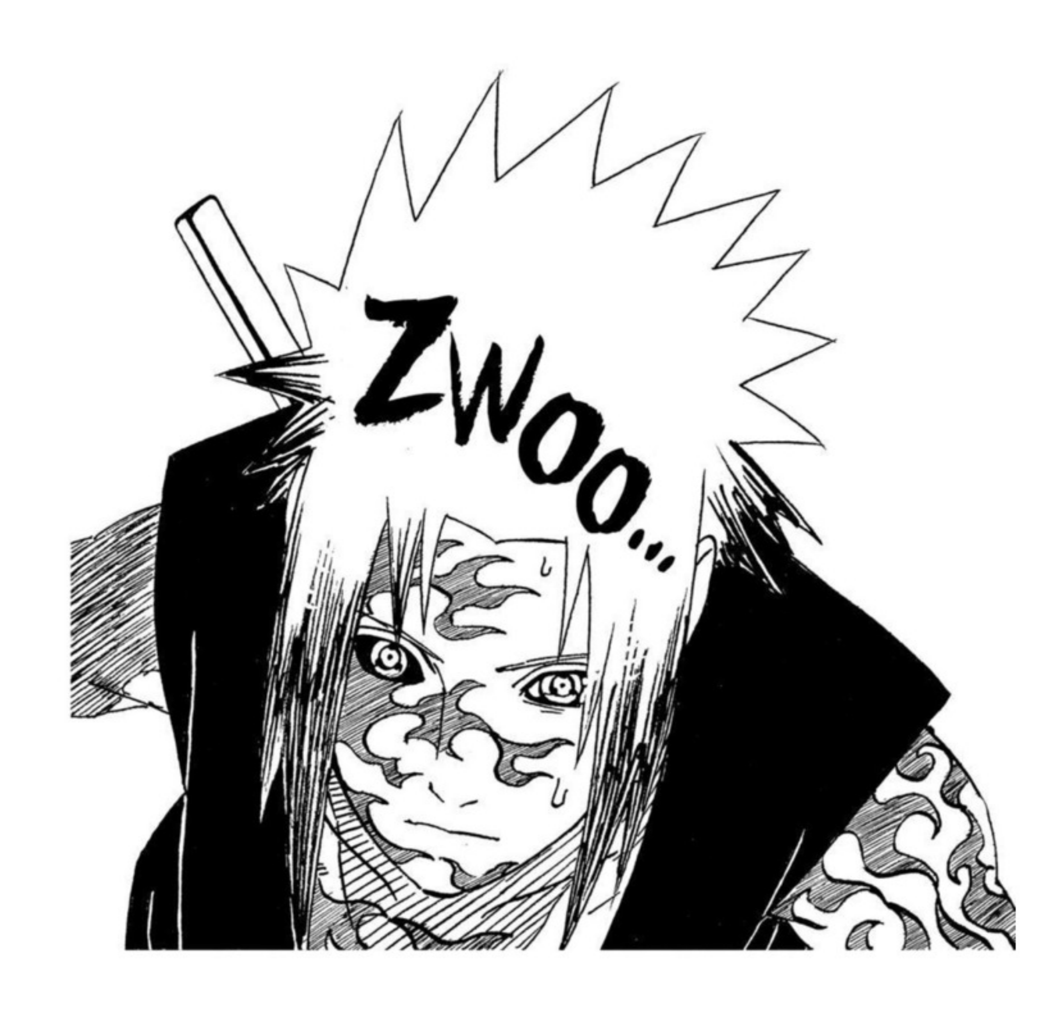

Pitter
Pitter

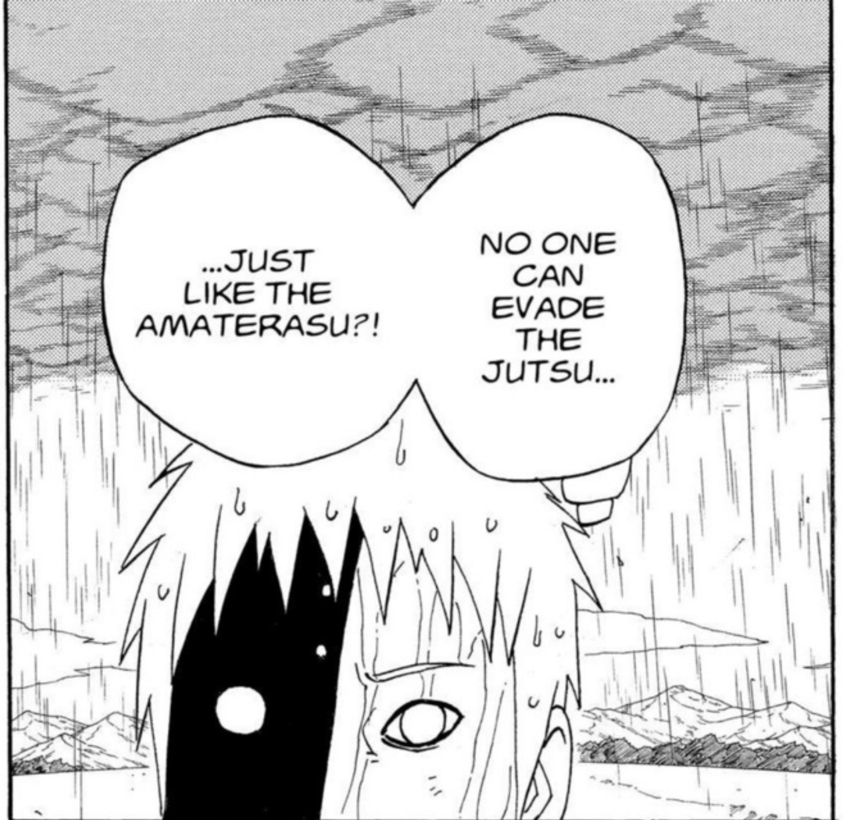

BUT...
...DO YOU **REALLY** THINK I WOULD COME HERE TO KILL YOU UNPREPARED?


Pitter
Patter


RRRUMBLE RUMBLE
IT ONLY LASTS AN IN- STANT ...
WHOOOSH
JUST LIKE THE AMATERASU, IT CANNOT BE BLOCKED OR EVADED.


NOW... YOU WANTED IT... SO HERE IT IS...!
...YOUR DEATH...

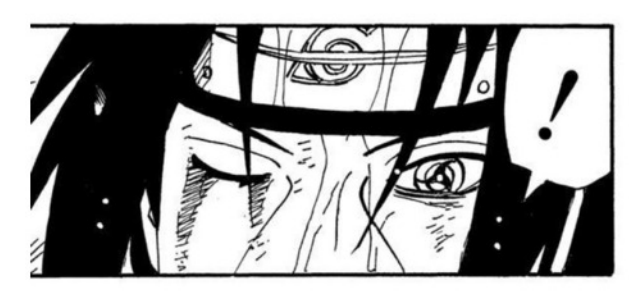

ZWOO...





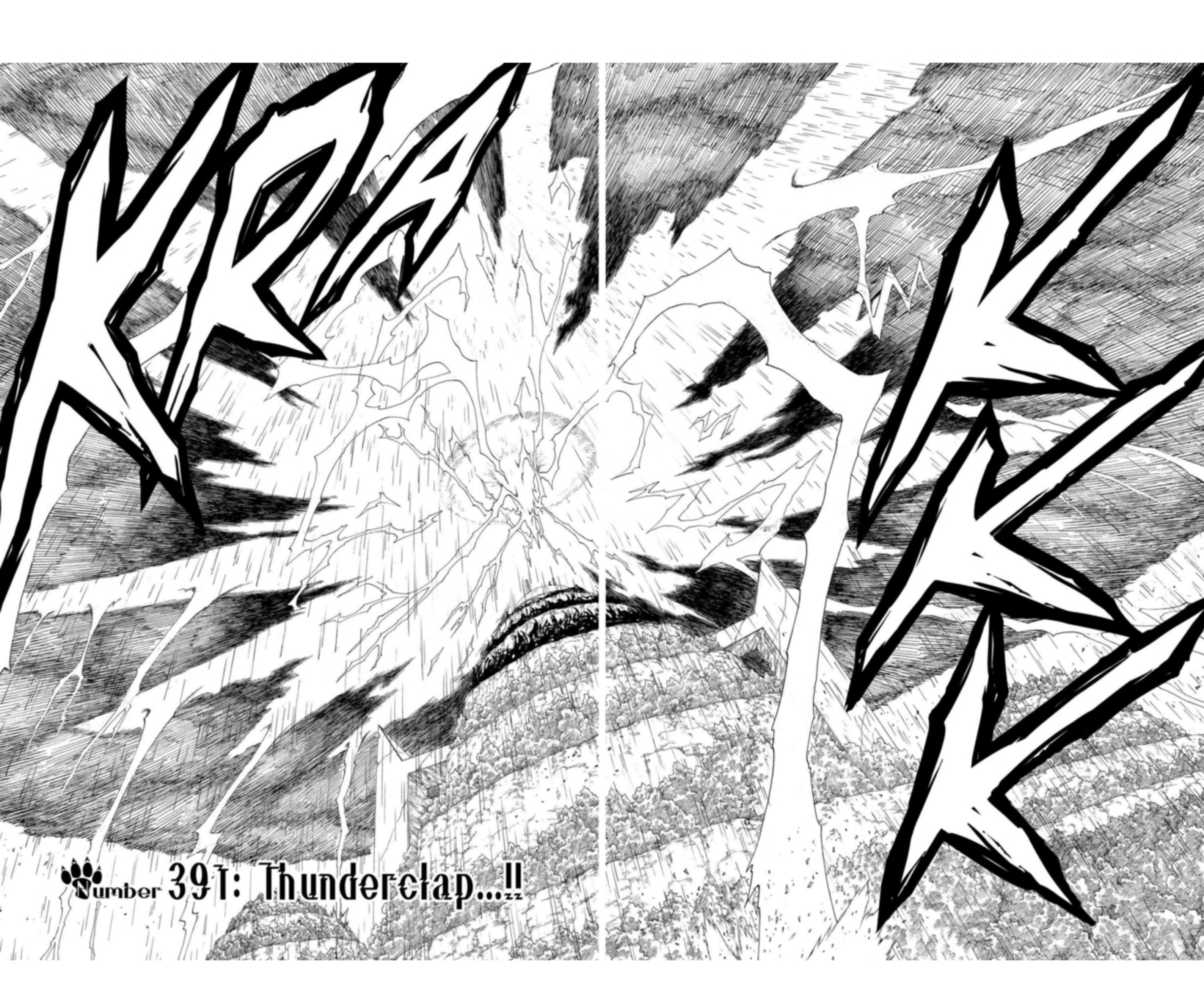


Number 391: Thunderclap...!!








KRA
Number 391: Thunderclap...!!







HE SHOT FIRE STYLE JUTSU INTO THE SKY...
...TO RAPIDLY RAISE THE AMBIENT AIR TEMPERATURE AND CREATE AN ASCENDING AIR CURRENT!
TO FORM A CUMULO-NIMBUS...
...A THUNDER-CLOUD!!
KRACKLE
KRACKLE



AND WHAT DOES THAT HAVE TO DO WITH...

HE DOESN'T HAVE TO USE HIS OWN CHAKRA...

...BUT JUST TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THE ENORMOUS AMBIENT ATMOSPHERIC ENERGY...

...TO CREATE A LIGHTNING STYLE JUTSU!

CHIRP CHIRP CHIRP CHIRP

WHICH ONE?

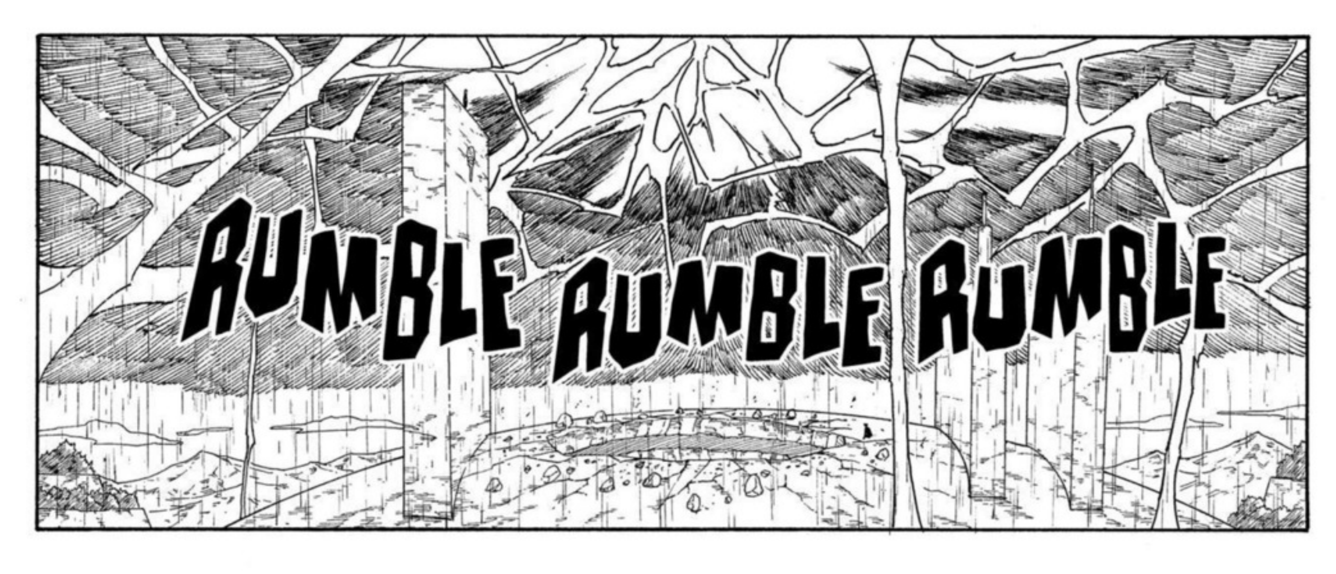
DOESN'T MATTER. WHICHEVER ONE IT IS, IT'LL BE ON A TOTALLY DIFFERENT SCALE THAN WHAT ANYONE CAN CREATE USING CHANGE IN CHAKRA NATURE ALONE!

FSH


TMP

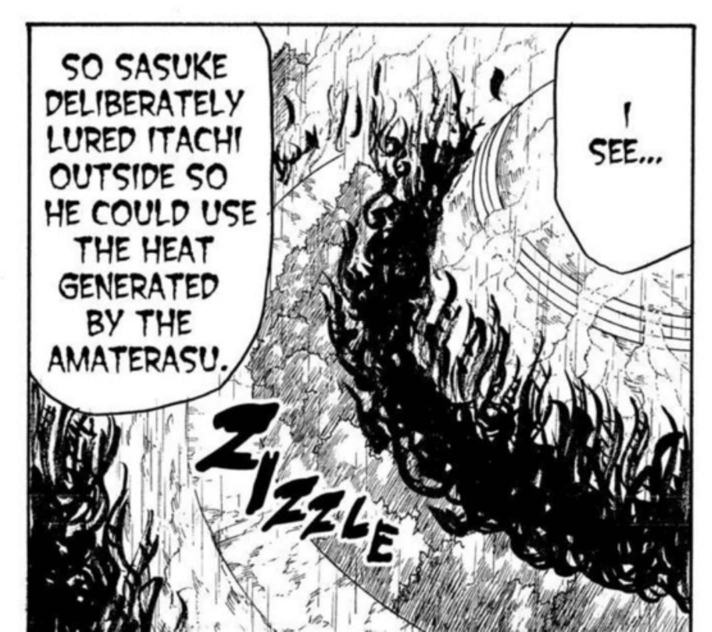

...


SHOOM

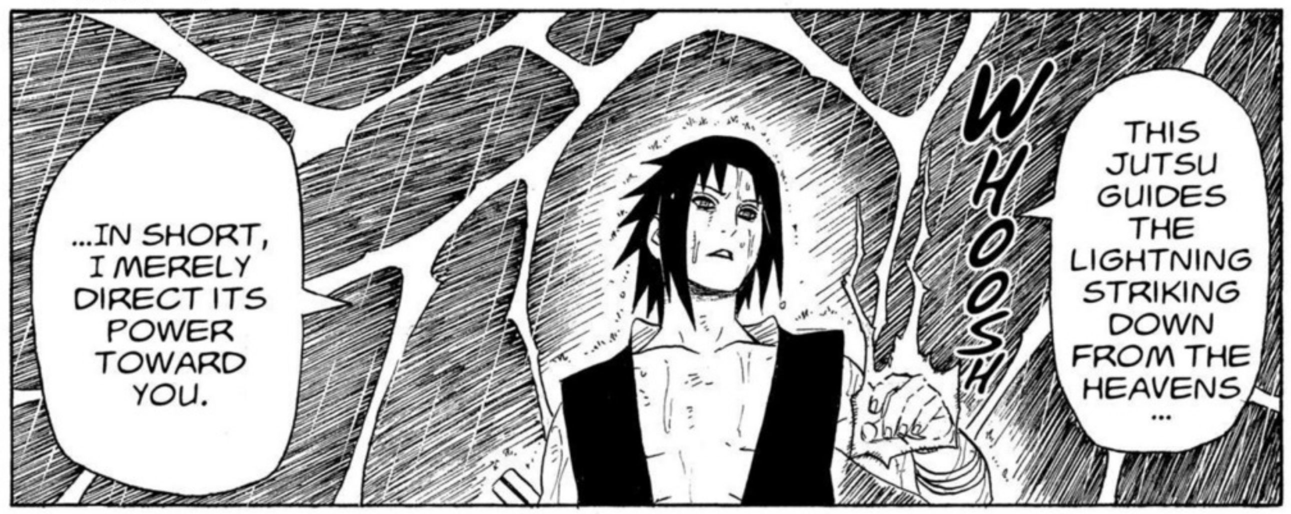

RUMBLE RUMBLE RUMBLE


ZIZZLE


!


I SEE...
SO SASUKE DELIBERATELY LURED ITACHI OUTSIDE SO HE COULD USE THE HEAT GENERATED BY THE AMATERASU.
ZIZZLE


READ THIS WAY


THIS JUTSU GUIDES THE LIGHTNING STRIKING DOWN FROM THE HEAVENS ...
WHOOOSH
...IN SHORT, I MERELY DIRECT ITS POWER TOWARD YOU.


JUST AS I THOUGHT... WHICH IS WHY IT CANNOT BE EVADED...
WHY NOT?!
THE SPEED OF LIGHTNING IS 1/1000 OF A SECOND... IT'S FASTER THAN SOUND!


THIS JUTSU IS KIRIN...
FSH...
KRACKLE KRACKLE KRACKLE

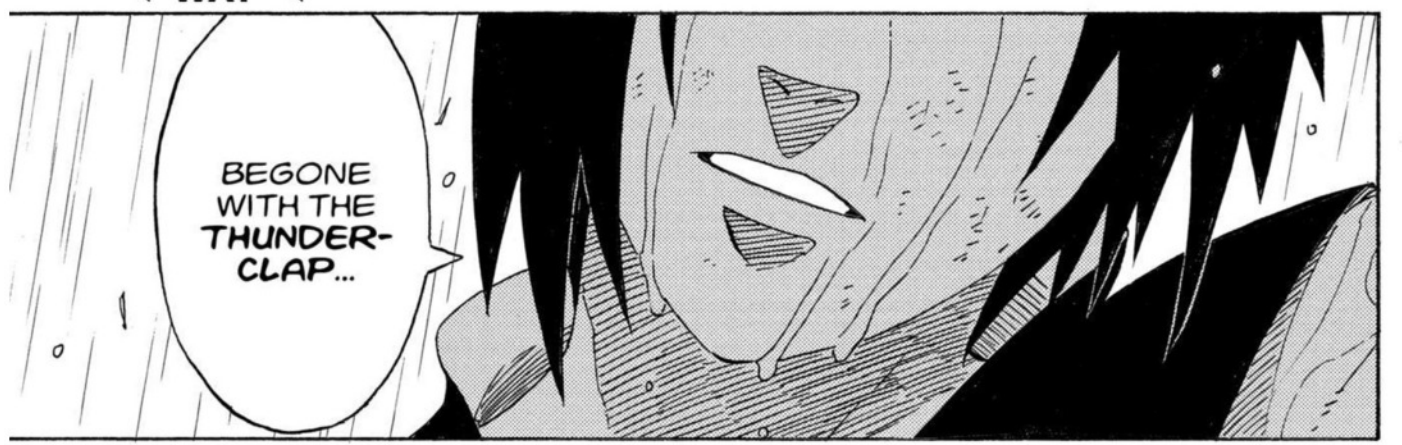

RUMBLE RUMBLE...


!

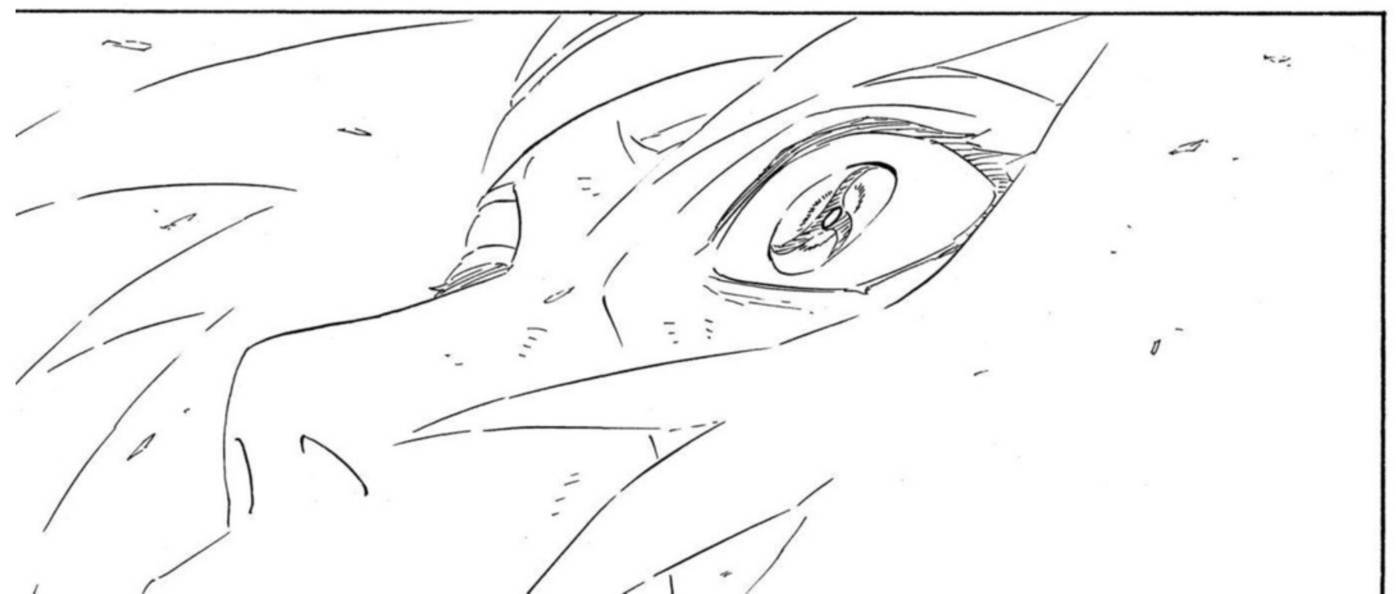

WH-WHAT?
SASUKE HAS TAMED LIGHT-NING?!!

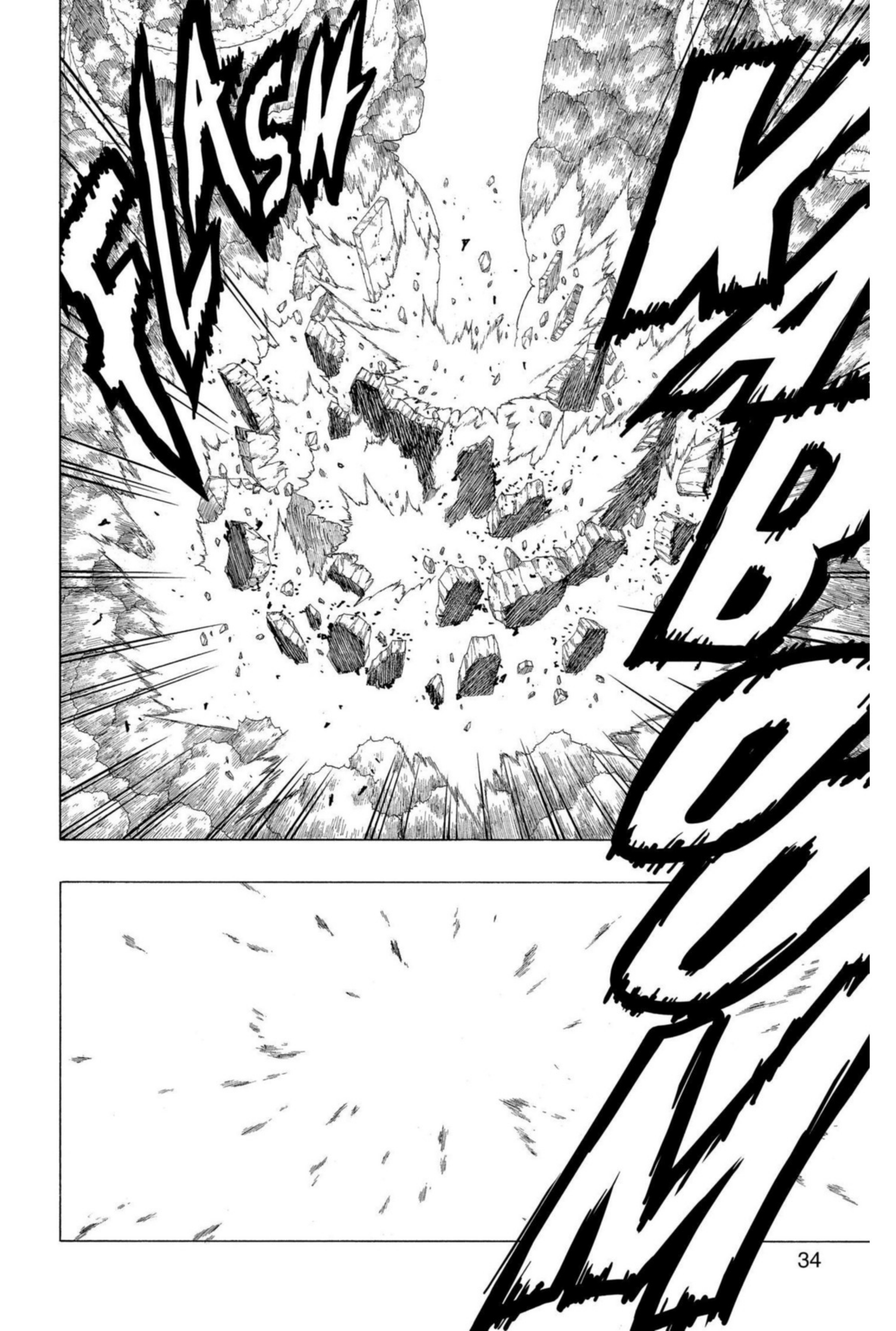






SLASH

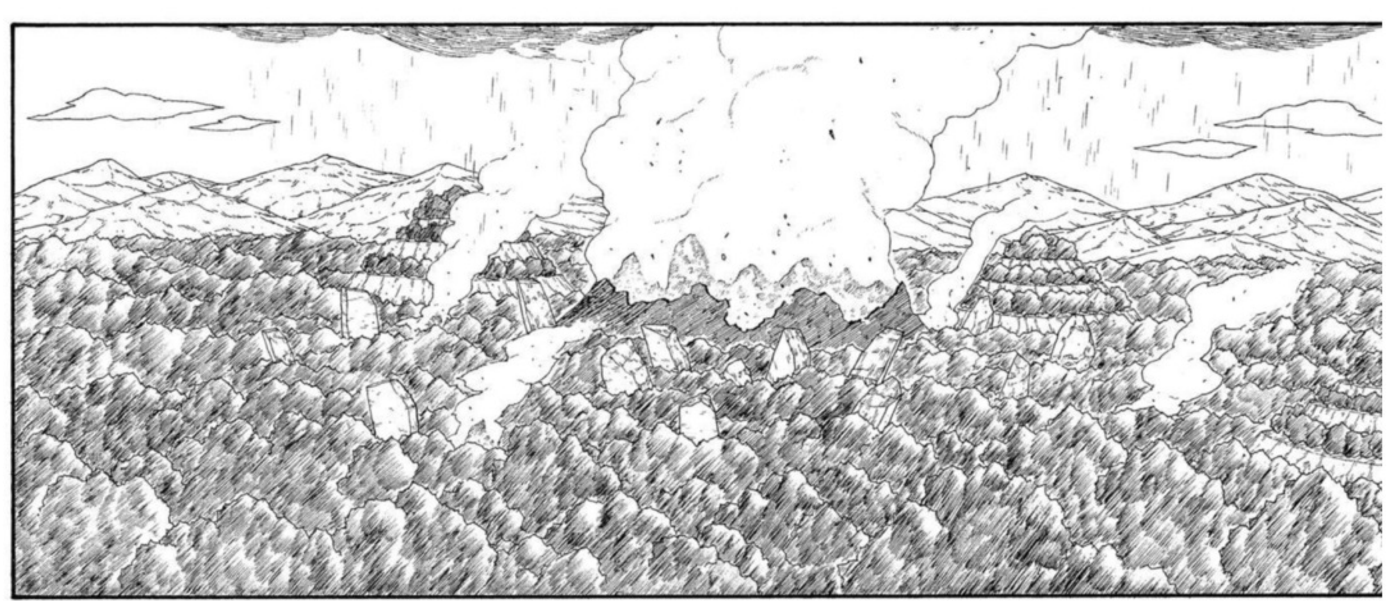



FLASH
KABOOM


READ
THIS
WAY

ARGH!!
ZZZZZZAP
FIZZZ
HUF
HUF
HUF
CLATTER
CLATTER
GAH...
SUCH POWER...


CLATTER
CLATTER
CLATTER...

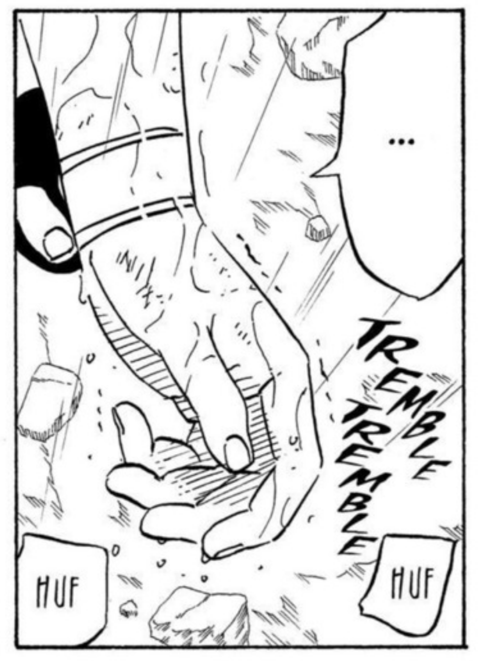



HUF
HUF

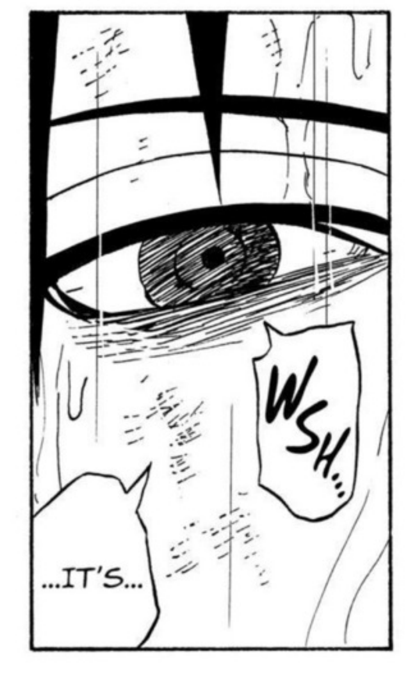


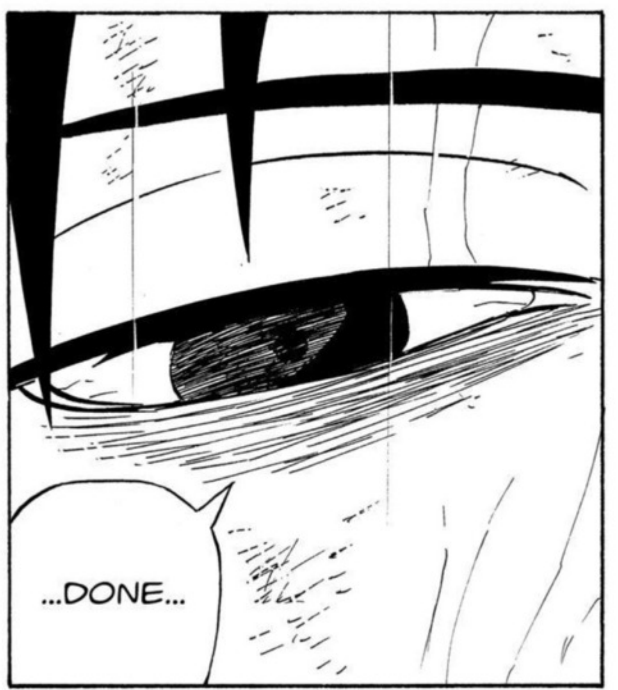

DID ITACHI... DIE...?
ZWOO...


READ
THIS
WAY

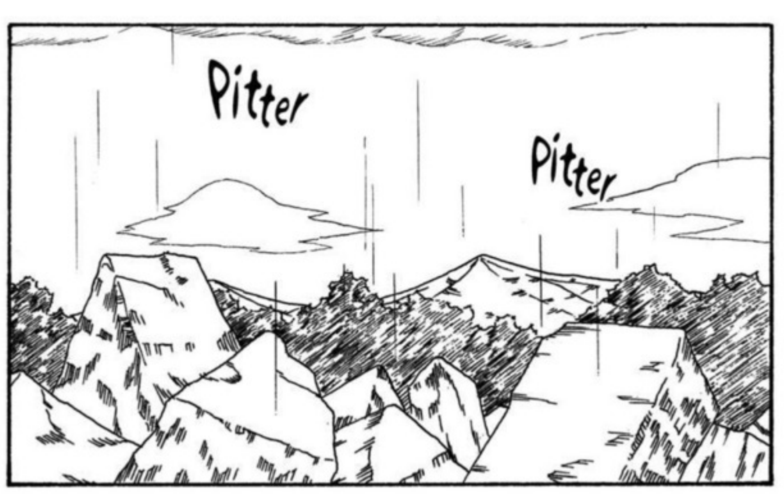

...
TREMBLE
TREMBLE
HUF
HUF


HUF
HUF


WSH...
...IT'S...

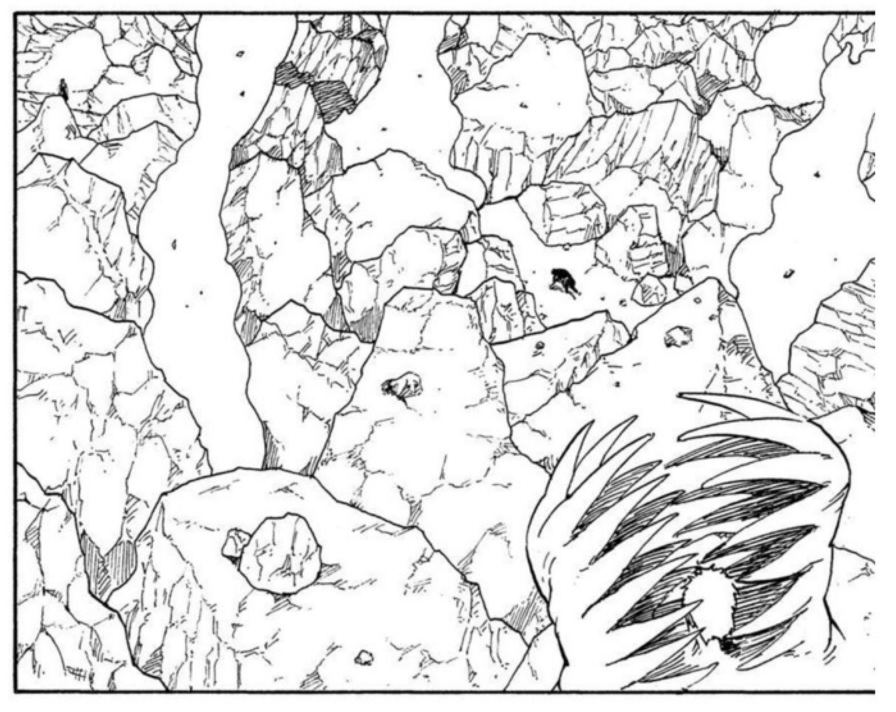
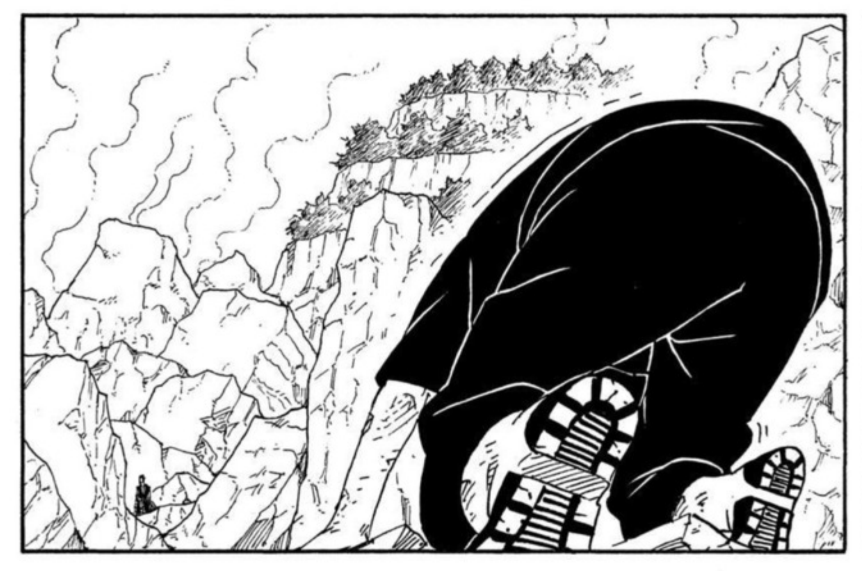
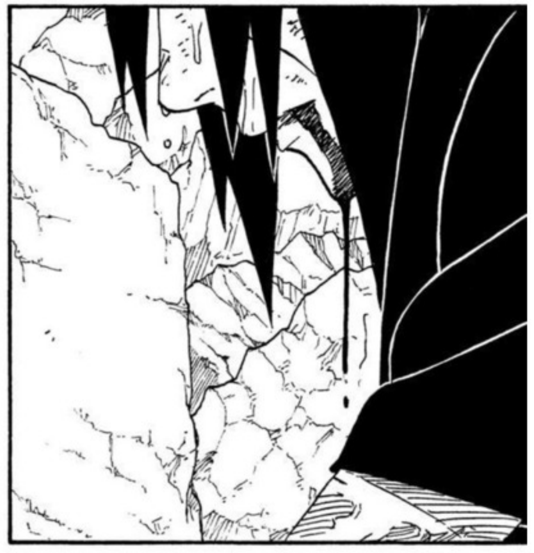

...DONE...


IT'S FINALLY OVER...!!
BUCKLE


Pitter
Pitter


IS THIS... THE DEATH YOU HAD IMAGINED FOR ME...?


!!!

HOIST...






GNASH...

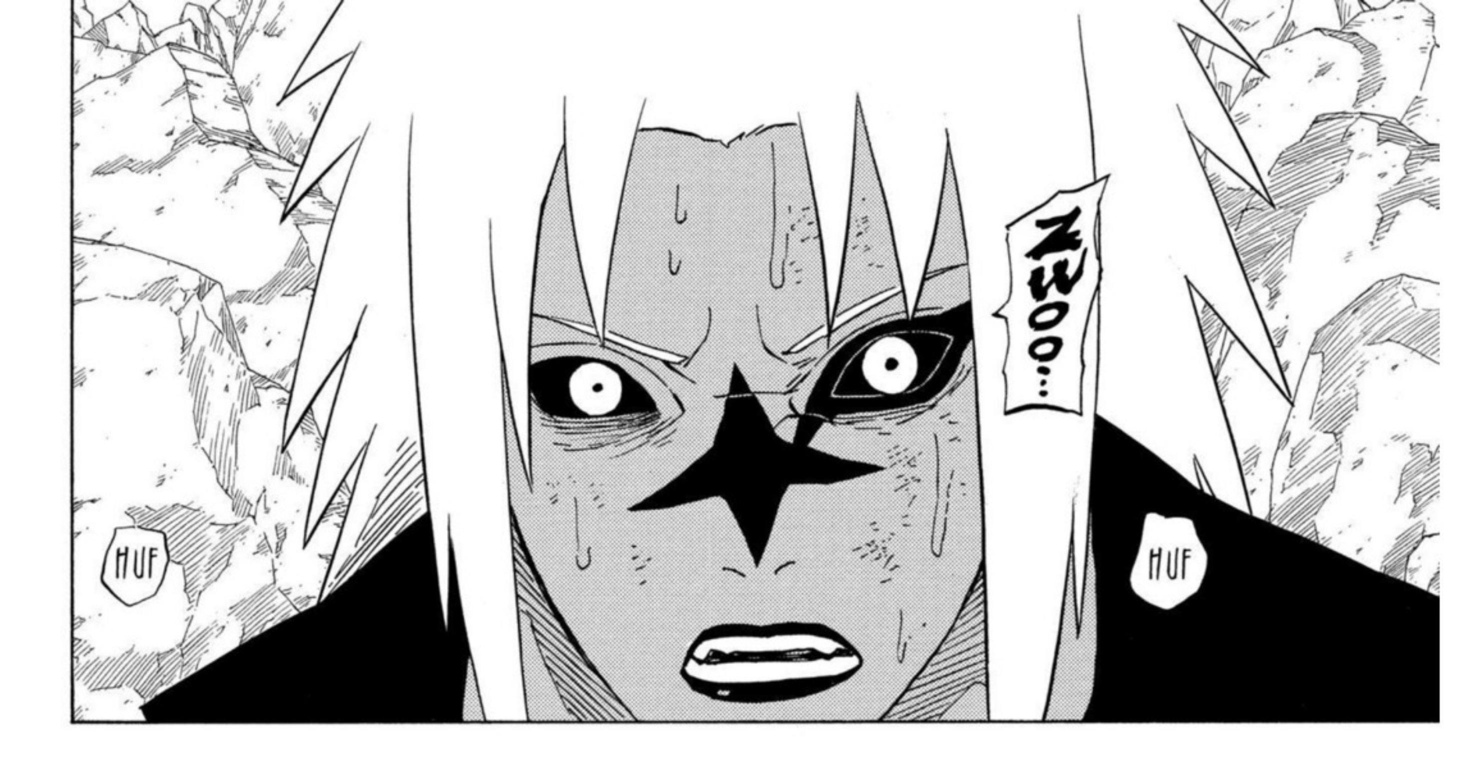
ZWOO...

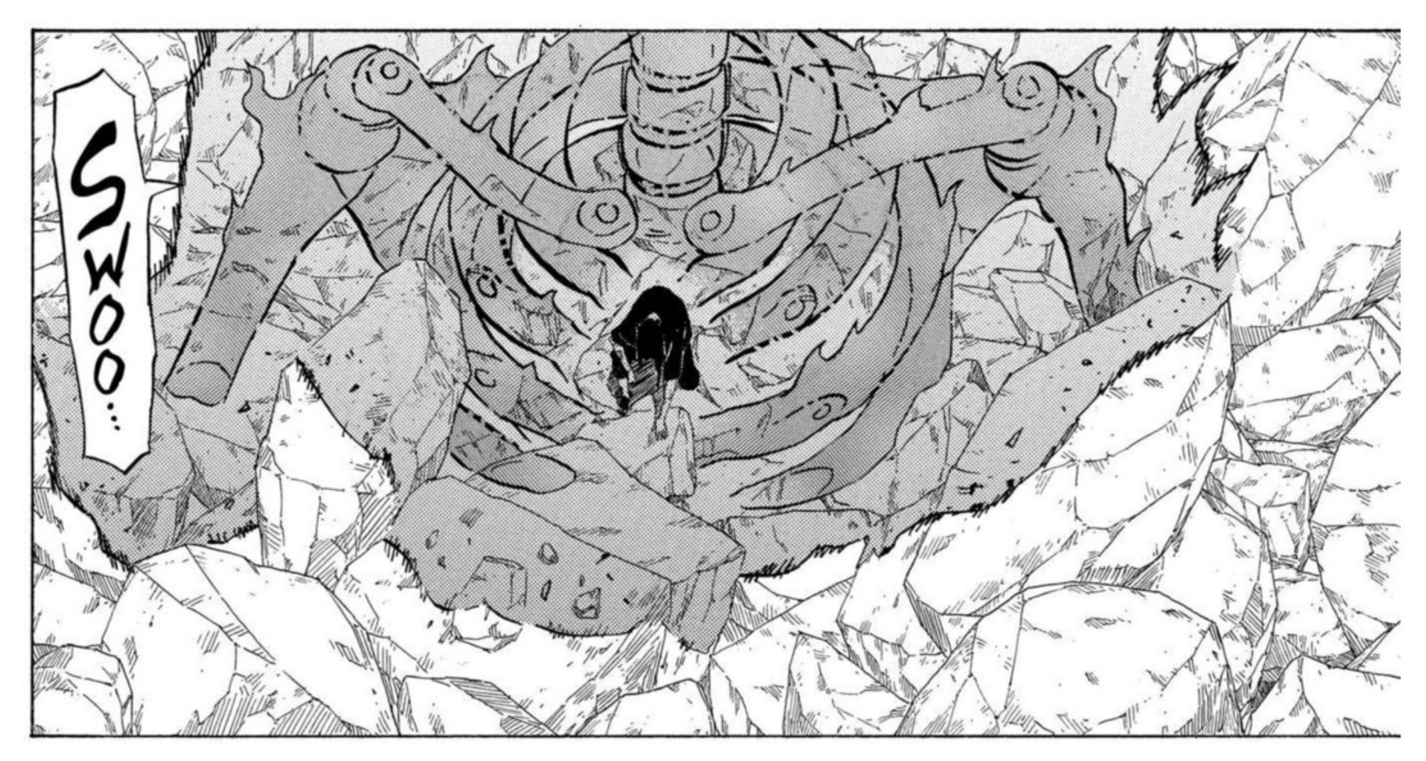
ZWOO...

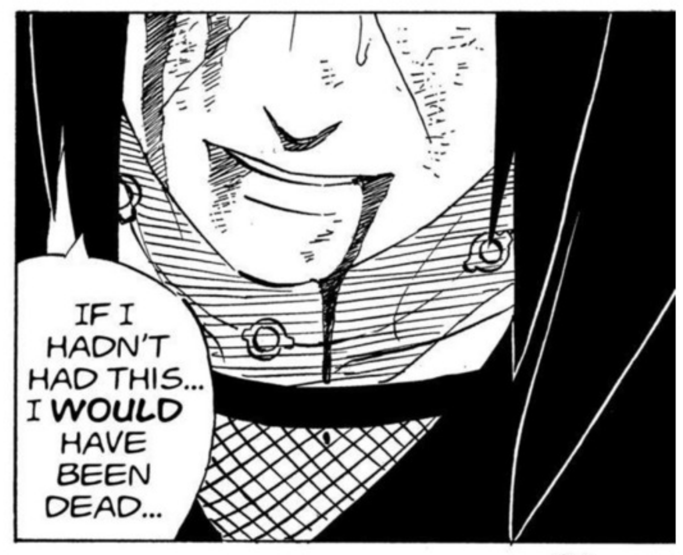
HOW DARE YOU!!!

!

THAT'S...!


ZWOO...
HUF
HUF

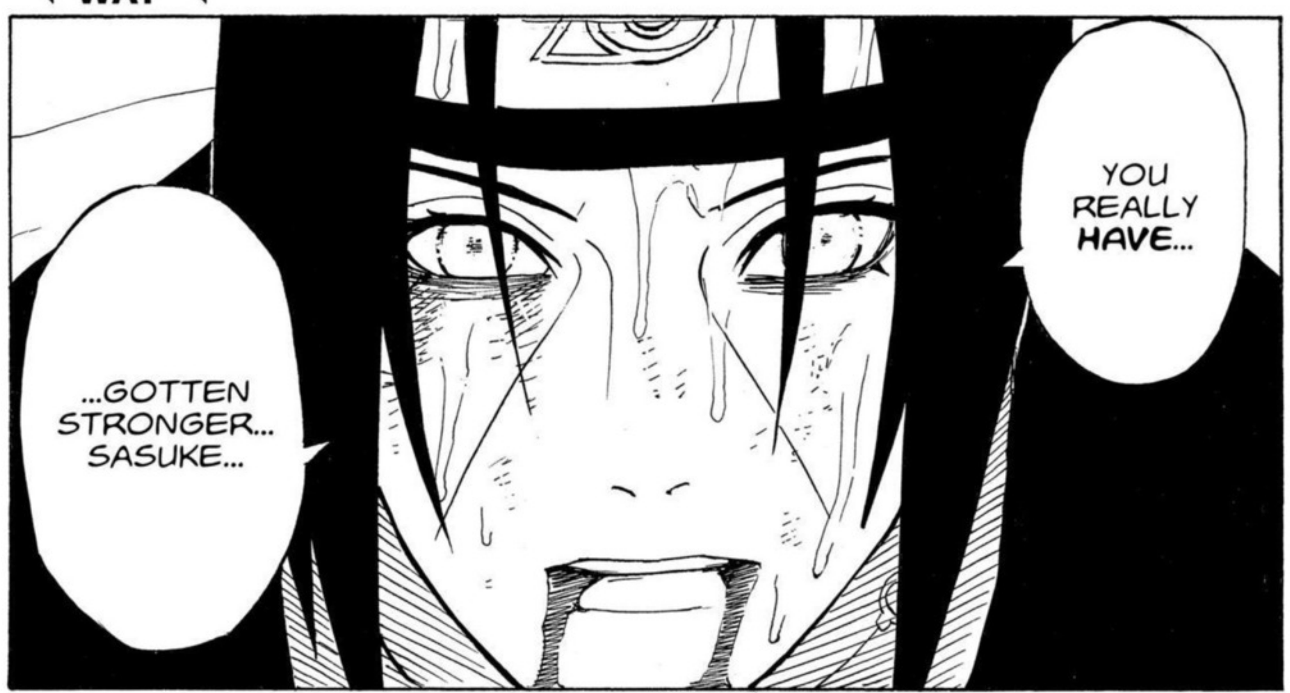

SWOO...

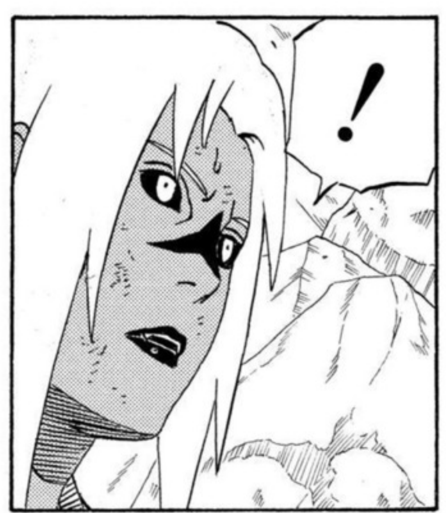

IF I HADN'T HAD THIS... I WOULD HAVE BEEN DEAD...


?!

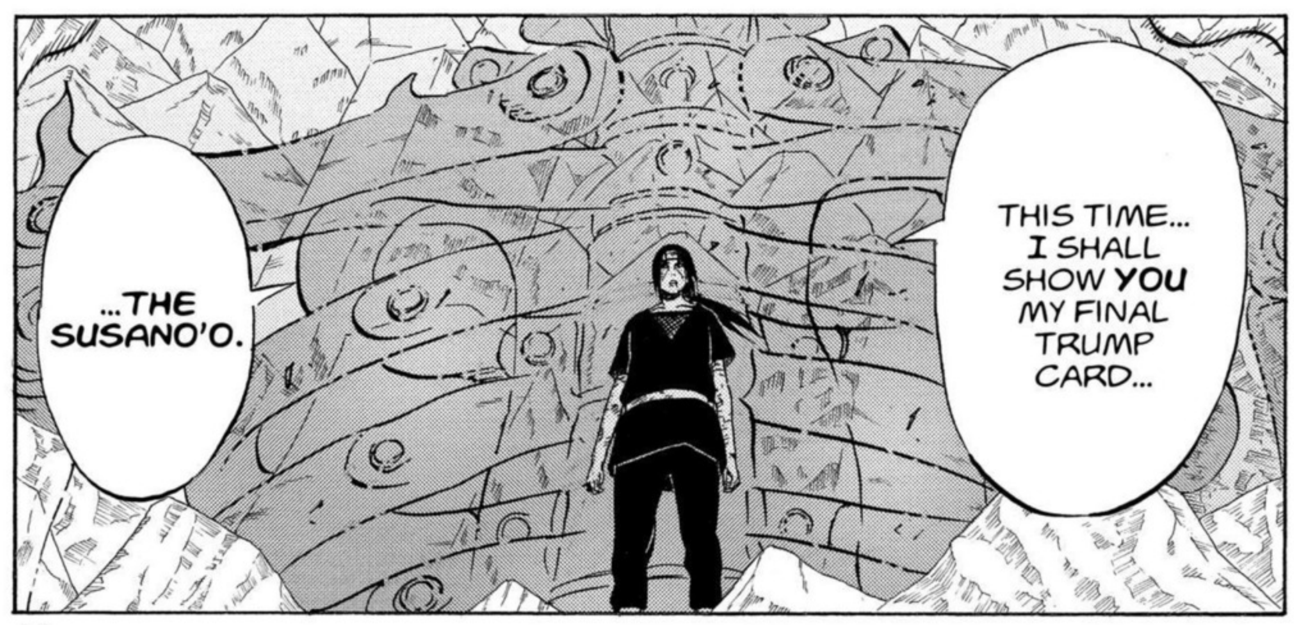

WHAT IS THAT?


READ
THIS
WAY


YOU REALLY HAVE...
...GOTTEN STRONGER... SASUKE...


!

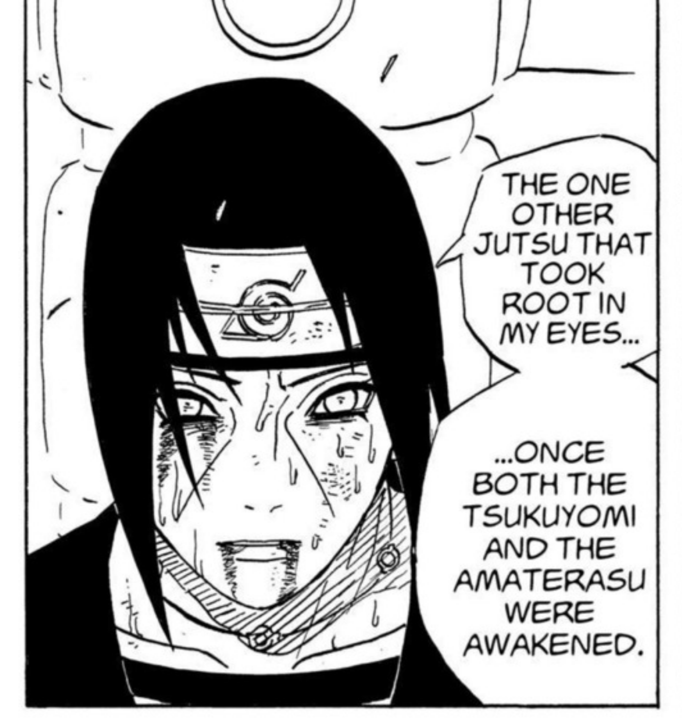

BLAZE...


THIS TIME... I SHALL SHOW YOU MY FINAL TRUMP CARD...
...THE SUSANO'O.



Number 392: Susano'o...!!




THE ONE OTHER JUTSU THAT TOOK ROOT IN MY EYES...
...ONCE BOTH THE TSUKUYOMI AND THE AMATERASU WERE AWAKENED.

HUF
HUF
...SUSANO'O ...?

IF YOU'VE GOT ANYTHING ELSE HIDDEN UP YOUR SLEEVE... NOW'S YOUR LAST CHANCE TO PLAY IT...
SASUKE... IS THAT IT... FOR YOUR JUTSU...?
SWOOO...

RROAR...
HUF
HUF

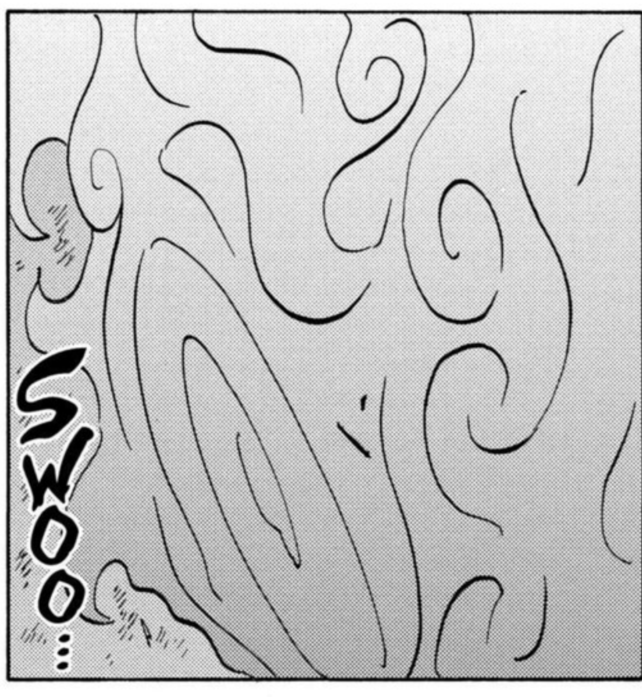
SEEMS LIKE LIGHTNING JUTSU IS A ONE-TIME ONLY TRICK...
THE SKIES ARE CLEAR-ING...
ZWOO...

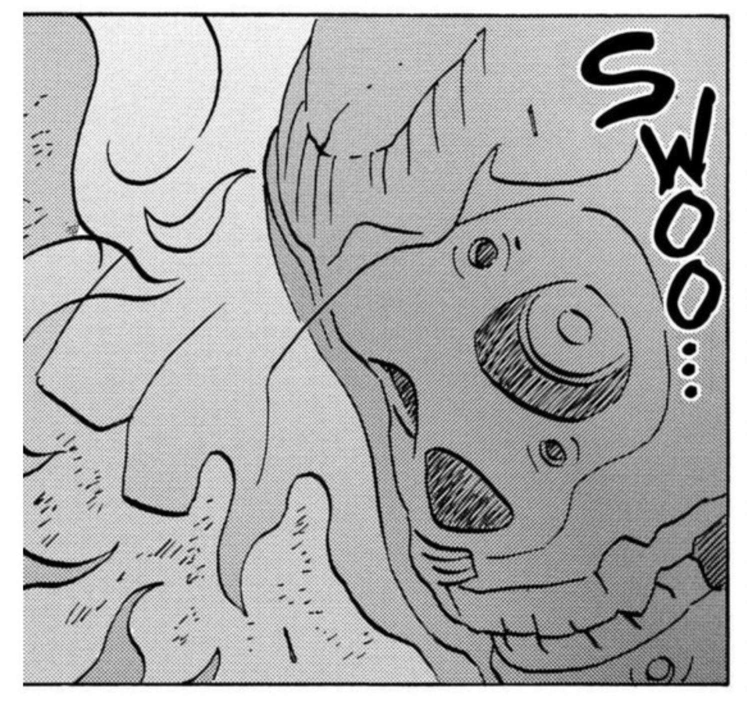
FOR HERE IT COMES FOR REAL ...


READ
THIS
WAY


SWOO...


SWOO...


SWOO...


SWOO...

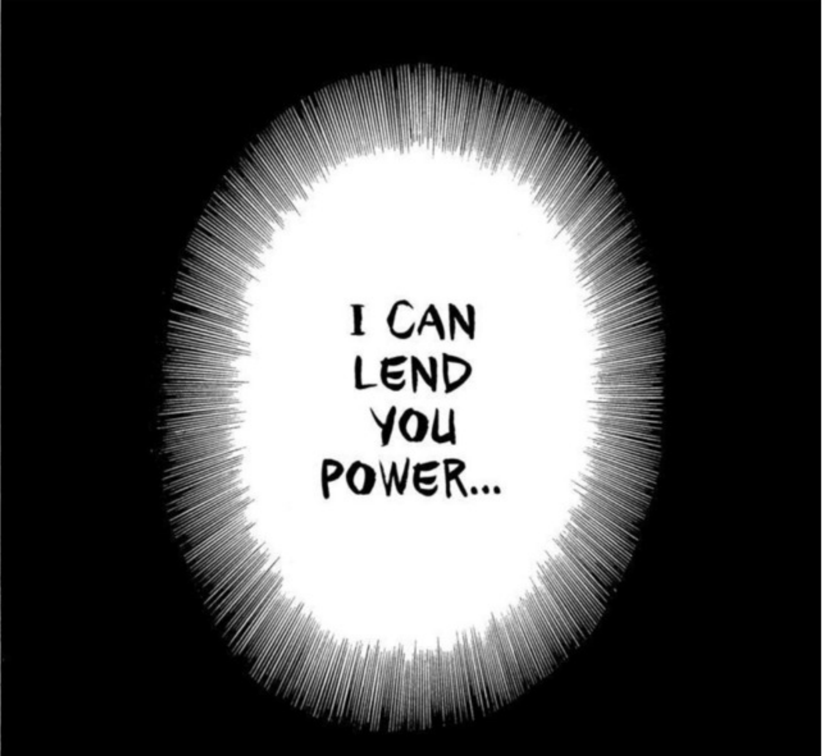

HUH... WHAT IS THAT?

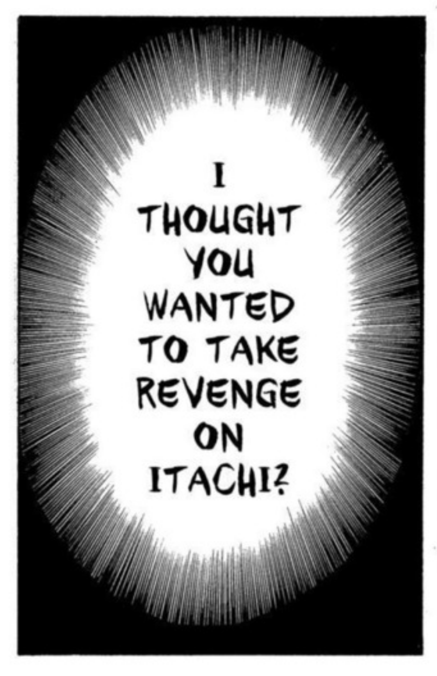

!


HUF...
HUF...
TOK
UGH...!
HUF
HUF
...I CAN GIVE IT TO YOU...

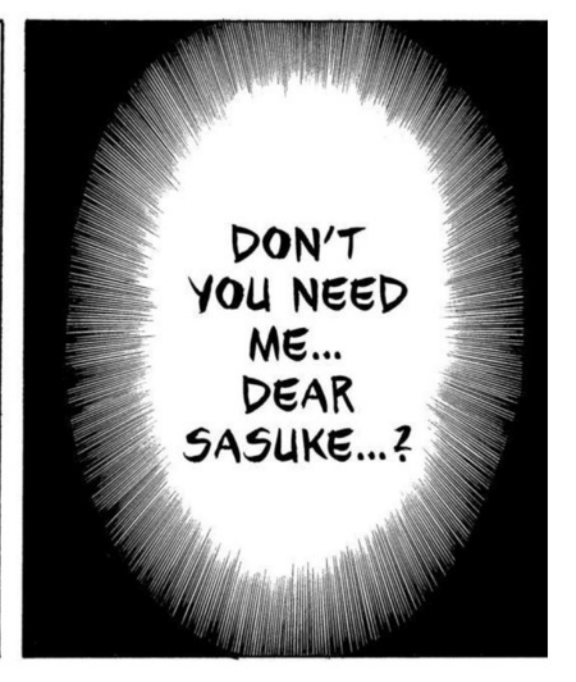

RROAR


GAH...!

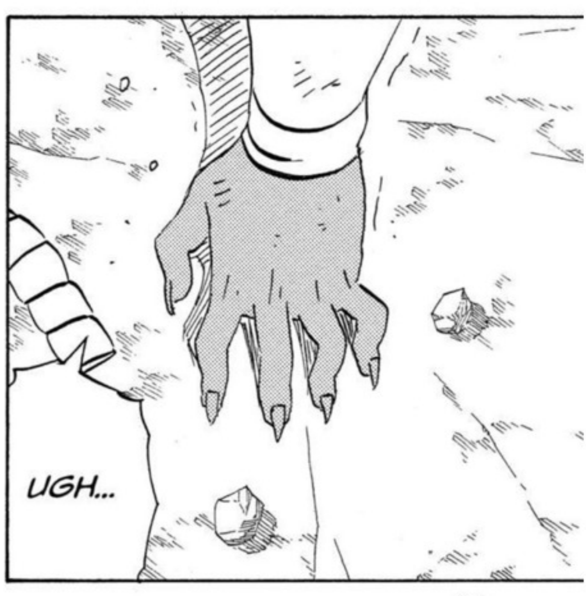

I CAN LEND YOU POWER...


I THOUGHT YOU WANTED TO TAKE REVENGE ON ITACHI?


THUMP
UNH ...
WRRBLE


DON'T YOU NEED ME... DEAR SASUKE...?

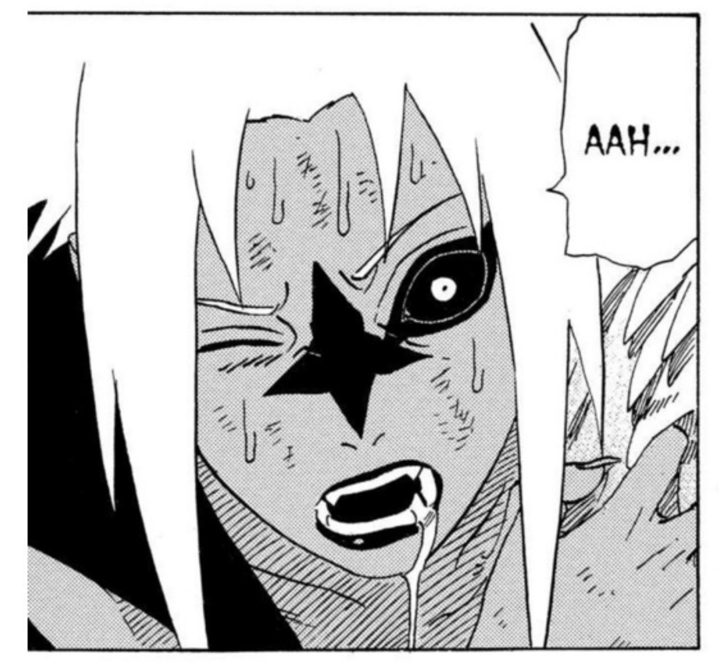

NOW... RELEASE ME! RELEASE MY POWER...
...SO YOU CAN FULFILL YOUR DREAM...


UGH...


READ THIS WAY


UGH...!
MOWND MOWND


MOWND MOWND...


AAH...

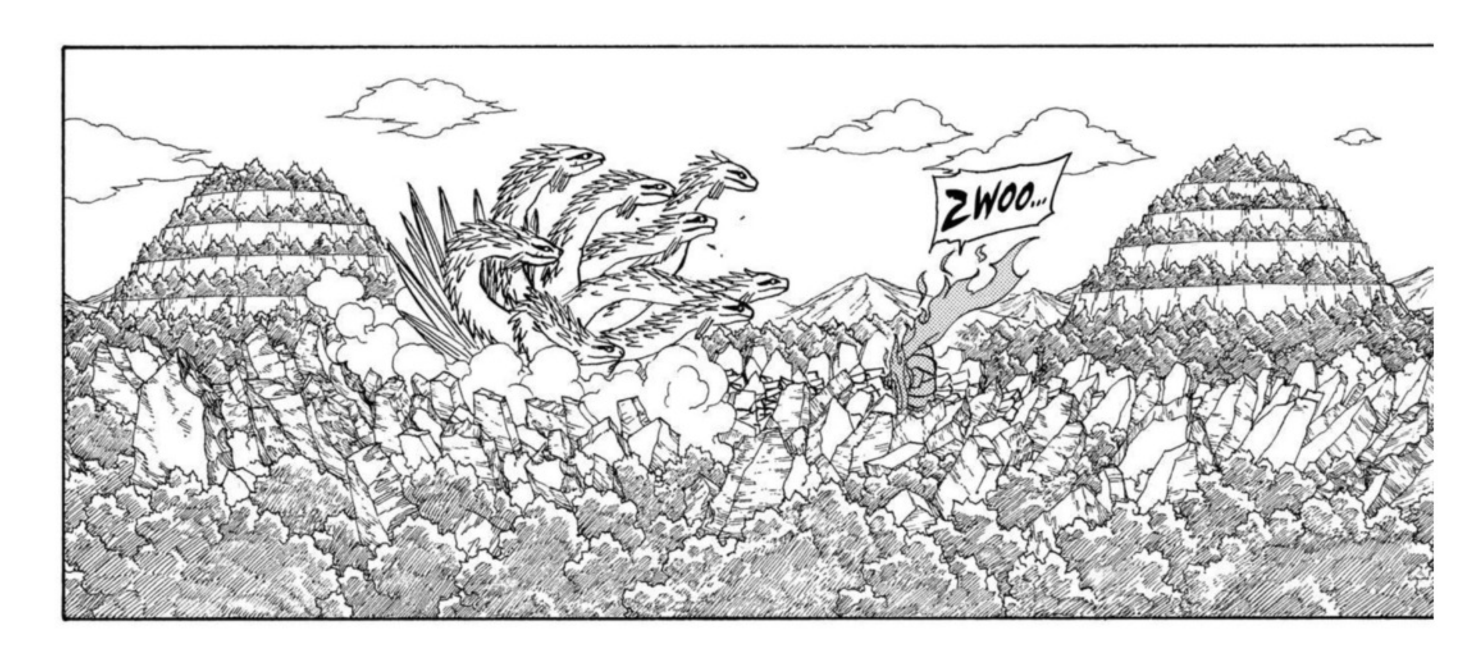

...


AAAARGH...!!
FWOOSH


THOOM
HSSS!!
JUDGING BY THE FEEL OF IT, THIS IS OROCHIMARU'S ART OF THE EIGHT-HEADED SERPENT...
WH-WHAT IS THAT?!
IT'S 'CUZ SASUKE TRIED TO SQUEEZE POWER OUT DESPITE HAVING NO MORE CHAKRA!
OROCHIMARU'S CHAKRA THAT HE'D ABSORBED AND SUPPRESSED HAS SHOVED ITS WAY TO THE SURFACE...!!


SHUP




ZWOO...


HSSSS


SLOSH


SLASH
THUD
LASH
FTAP


BWHAM
SPURT
THUD
THUD
THUD
THUD
THUD
THUD
THUD

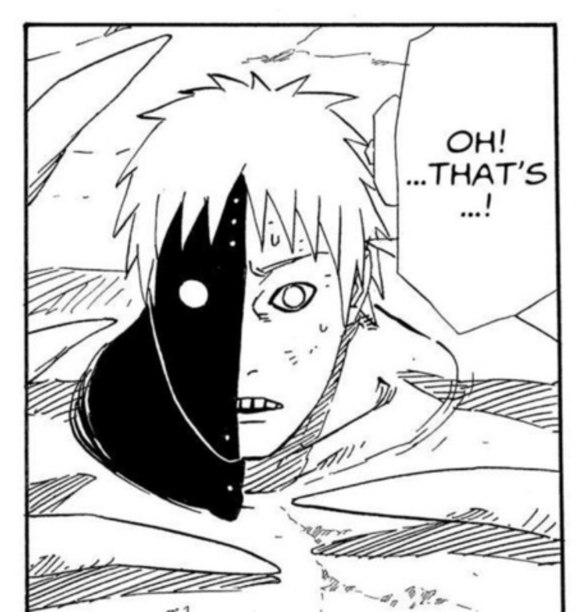


VWEEN

ZZZ...

ZZ...



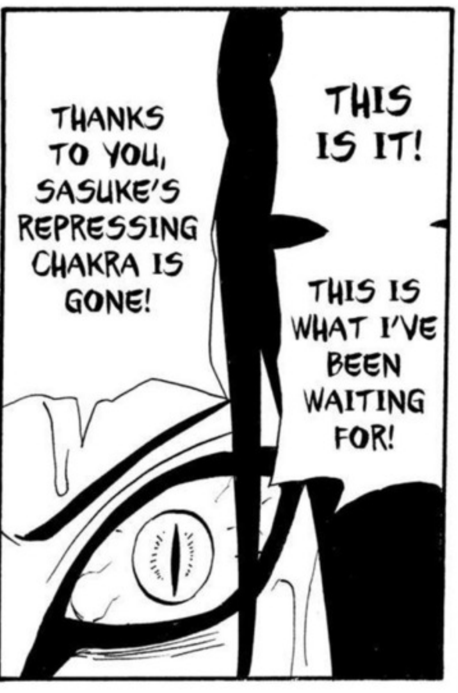


A-HAHAHAHA!!!

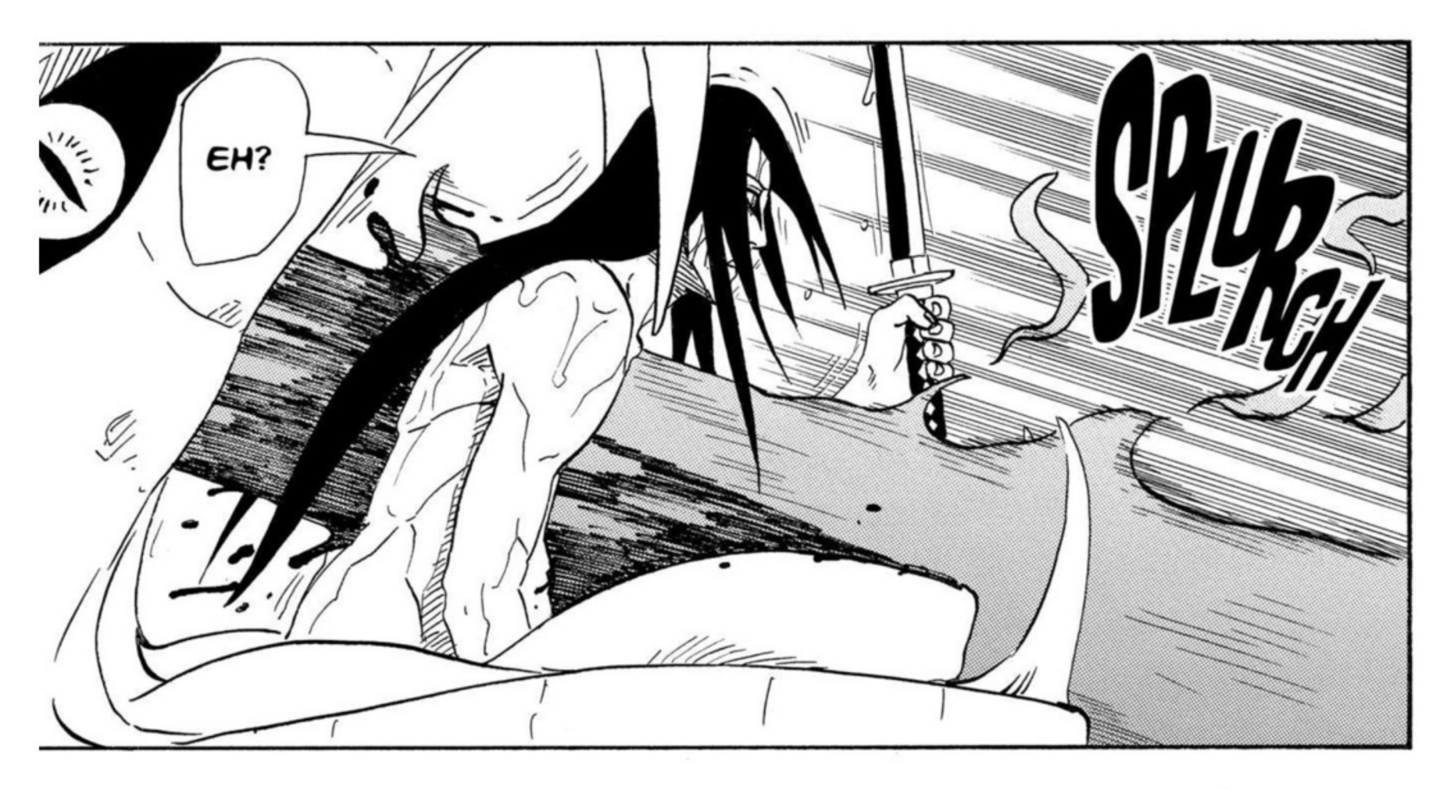




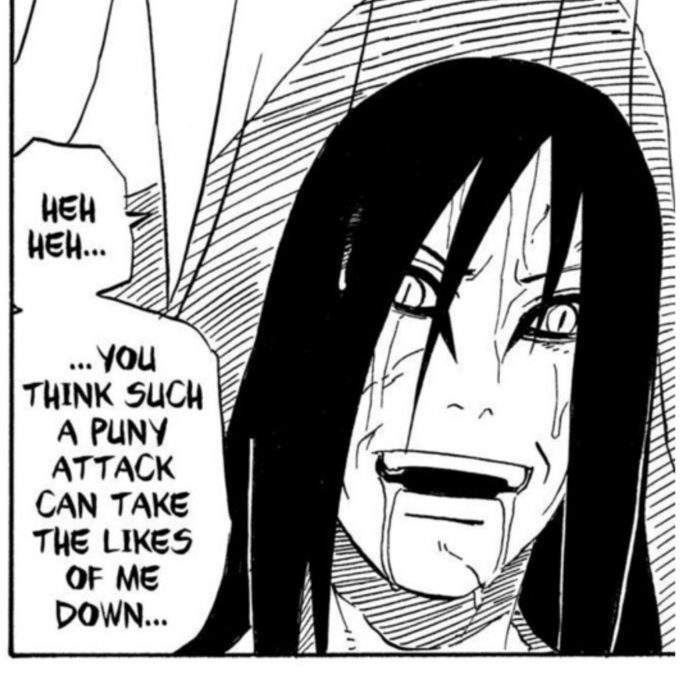

GROSS FELLOW AS ALWAYS, REGURGI-TATING THINGS.
SLITHERING ABOUT LIKE THE SNAKE HE IS.


THIS IS IT!
THIS IS WHAT I'VE BEEN WAITING FOR!
THANKS TO YOU, SASUKE'S REPRESSING CHAKRA IS GONE!

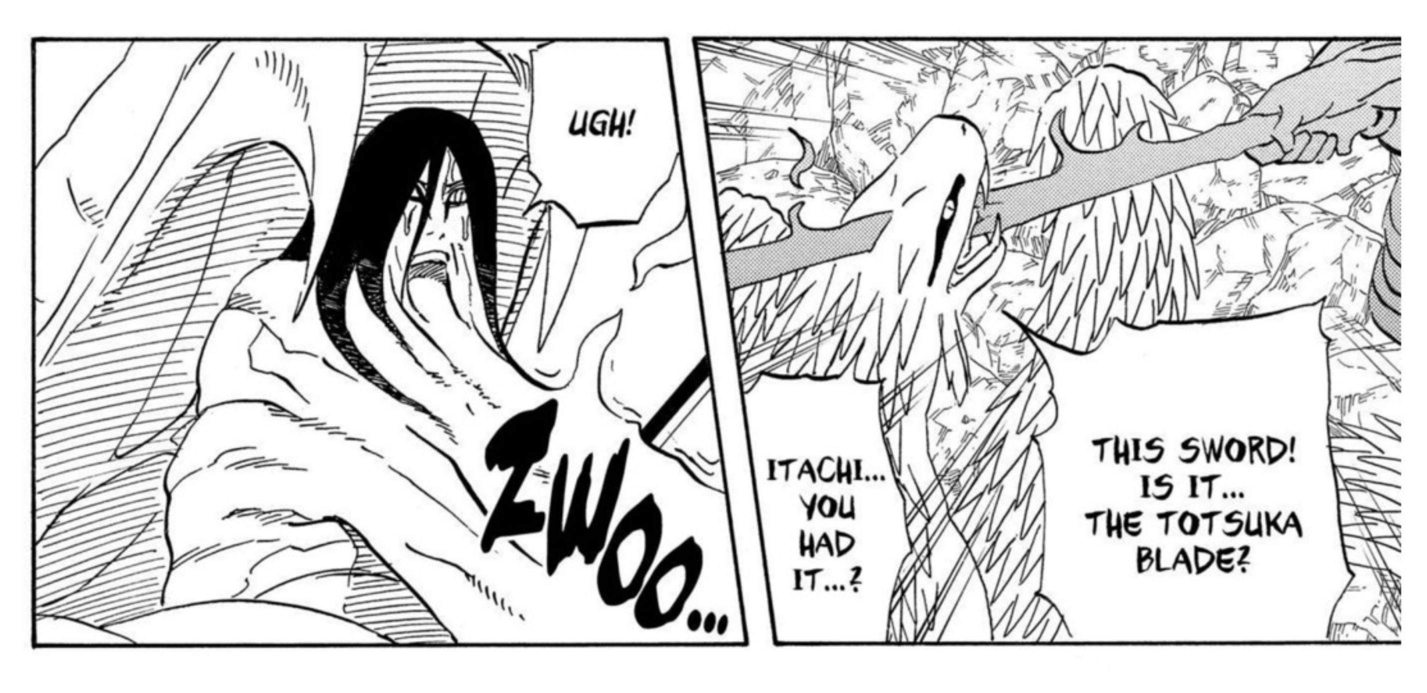

NOW I CAN TAKE OVER THE CHILD'S BODY AND...


SPLURCH
EH?

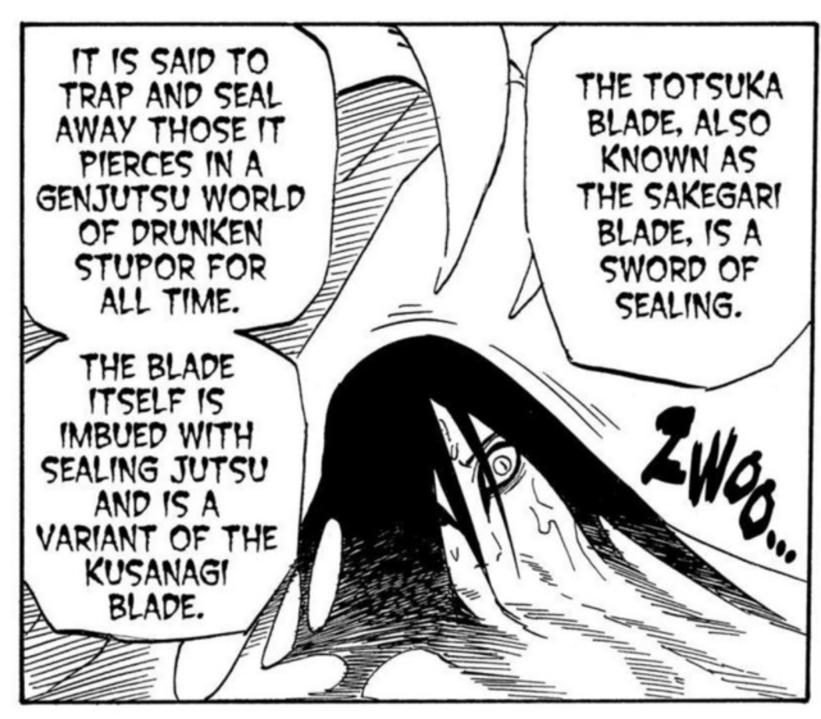

WELL, SASUKE...
...WHAT NEXT?


HEH HEH...
...YOU THINK SUCH A PUNY ATTACK CAN TAKE THE LIKES OF ME DOWN...


!!
KREEEK


THIS SWORD! IS IT... THE TOTSUKA BLADE?
ITACHI... YOU HAD IT...?
UGH!
ZWOO...


NO WONDER NO ONE'S BEEN ABLE TO LOCATE IT...
IT'S A SPIRIT BLADE THAT HAS NO PHYSICAL FORM...
WH- WHAT'S WITH THAT SWORD ...?


THE TOTSUKA BLADE, ALSO KNOWN AS THE SAKEGARI BLADE, IS A SWORD OF SEALING.
IT IS SAID TO TRAP AND SEAL AWAY THOSE IT PIERCES IN A GENJUTSU WORLD OF DRUNKEN STUPOR FOR ALL TIME.
THE BLADE ITSELF IS IMBUED WITH SEALING JUTSU AND IS A VARIANT OF THE KUSANAGI BLADE.
ZWOO...



OROCHIMARU HAS BEEN LOOKING FOR THIS SWORD FOR A VERY LONG TIME.

OCULAR POWERS... AND ALL THESE JUTSU... ITACHI REALLY IS SUPER-STRONG!

ZWOOO...

ZWOOO

SNIP

SNIP

HUF

HUF



MEET KISHIMOTO MASASHI'S ASSISTANTS, PART 12
ASSISTANT NO. 12: TAIRA KENJI

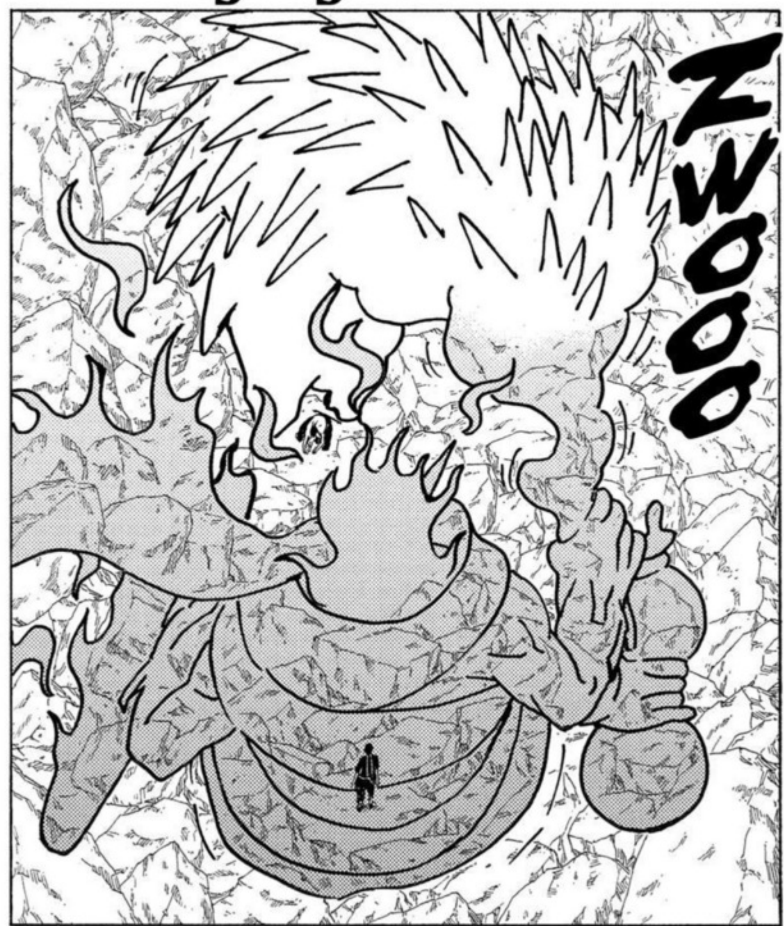
PROFILE

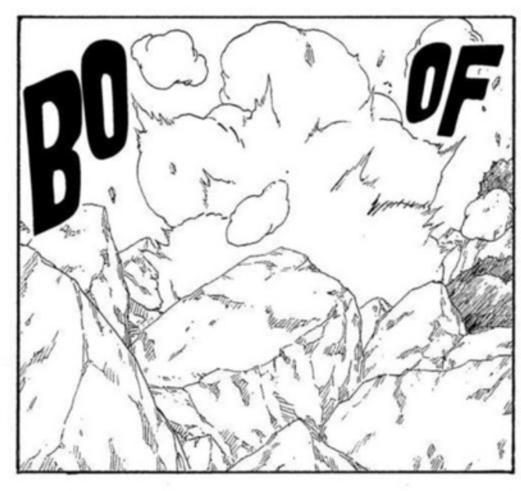
- DESPITE BEING A BRAT WHO JUST TURNED 20, HE'S SO SERIOUS HE'S NOT CUTE AT ALL.
- DOESN'T WARM UP TO ME AT ALL.
- ALWAYS ACTS COOL.
- HAS ALL SORTS OF FUNNY THOUGHTS IN HIS HEAD THAT HE NEVER SHARES.
- AMBITIOUS AND VERY STUDIOUS.
- HASN'T WON ANY AWARDS BUT DEBUTED PROMINENTLY.
- I'LL ACKNOWLEDGE THAT HE HAS A STRONG GAG SENSIBILITY.
- LOVES JOJO OVER NARUTO! ARAKI HIROHIKO-SENSEI OVER KISHIMOTO MASASHI!!
- LOVES JOJO SO MUCH, HE ONLY WARMS UP TO ME WHEN I TALK ABOUT JOJO.

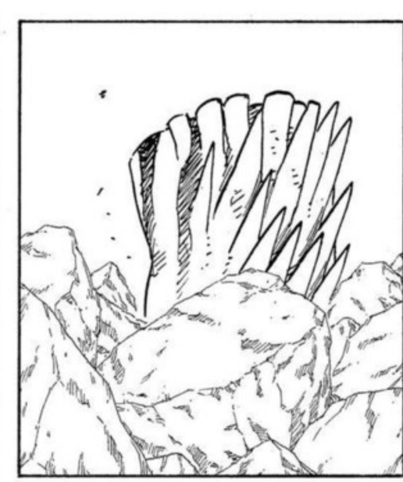


Number 393: My Eyes...!!



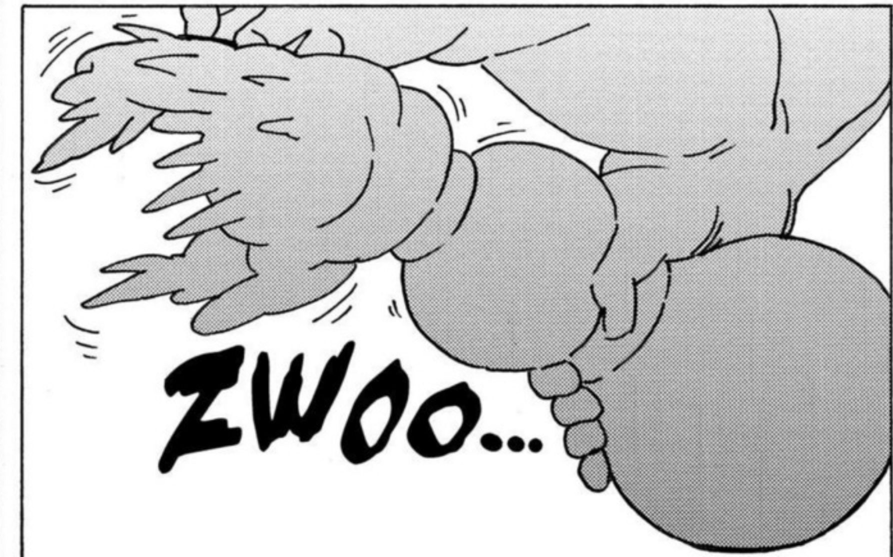


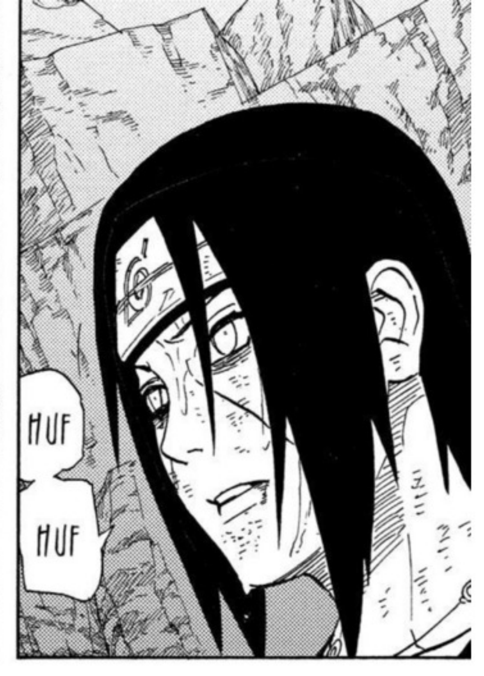


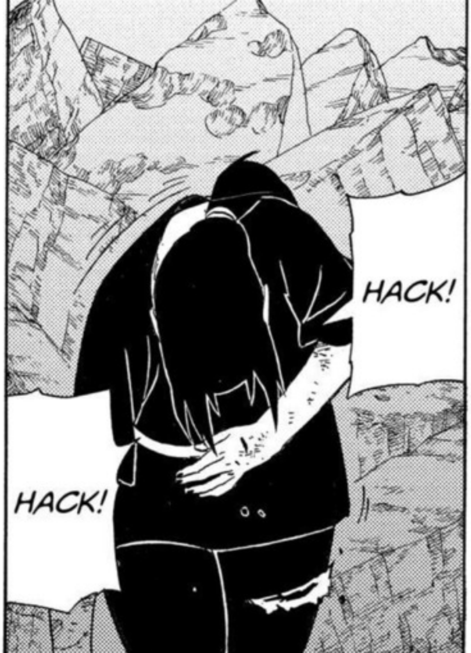




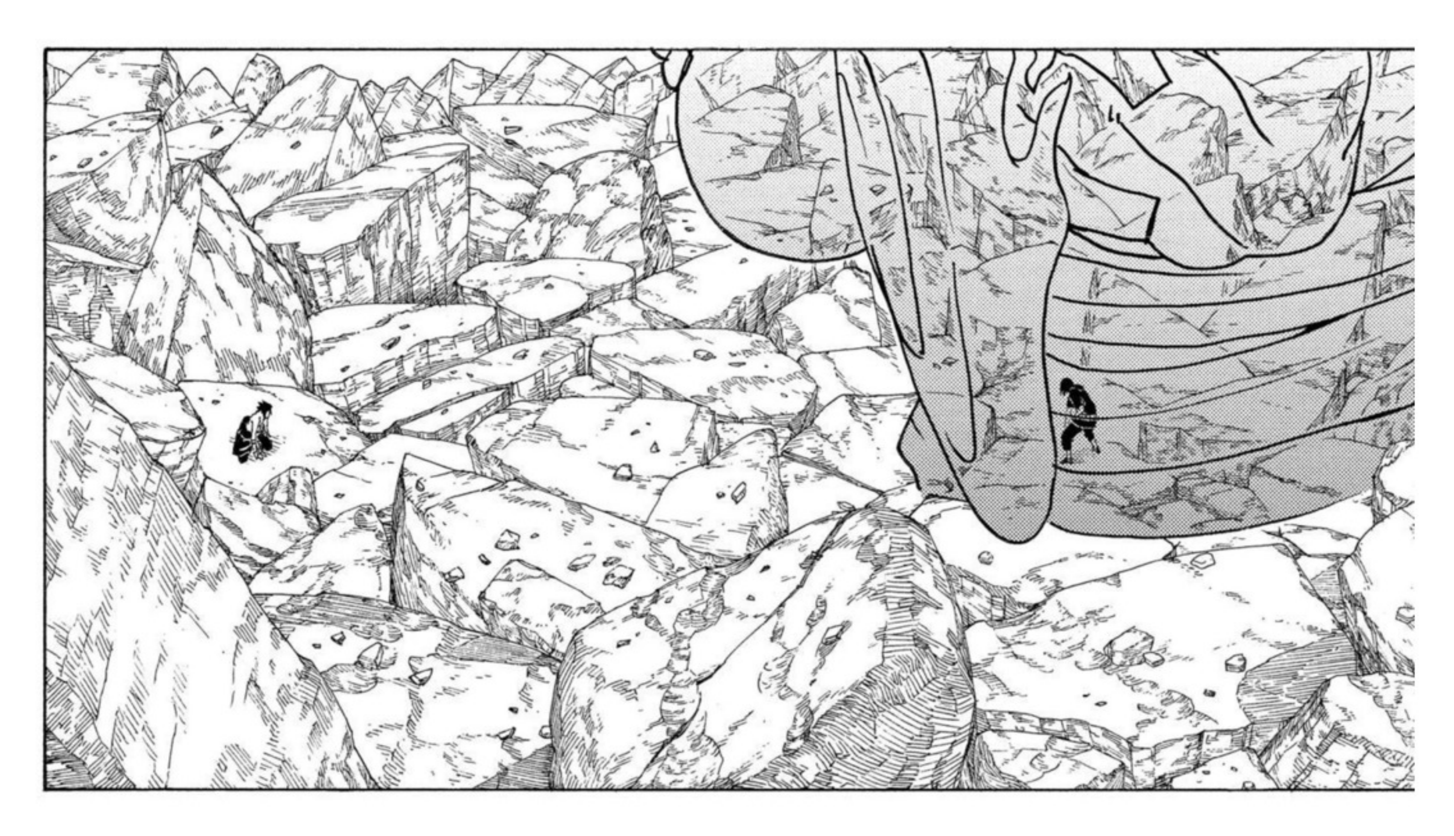





HUF
HUF


HACK!
HACK!


THAT JUTSU HE CALLS SUSANO'O...
...SURE SEEMS HARD ON THE WIELDER'S BODY.



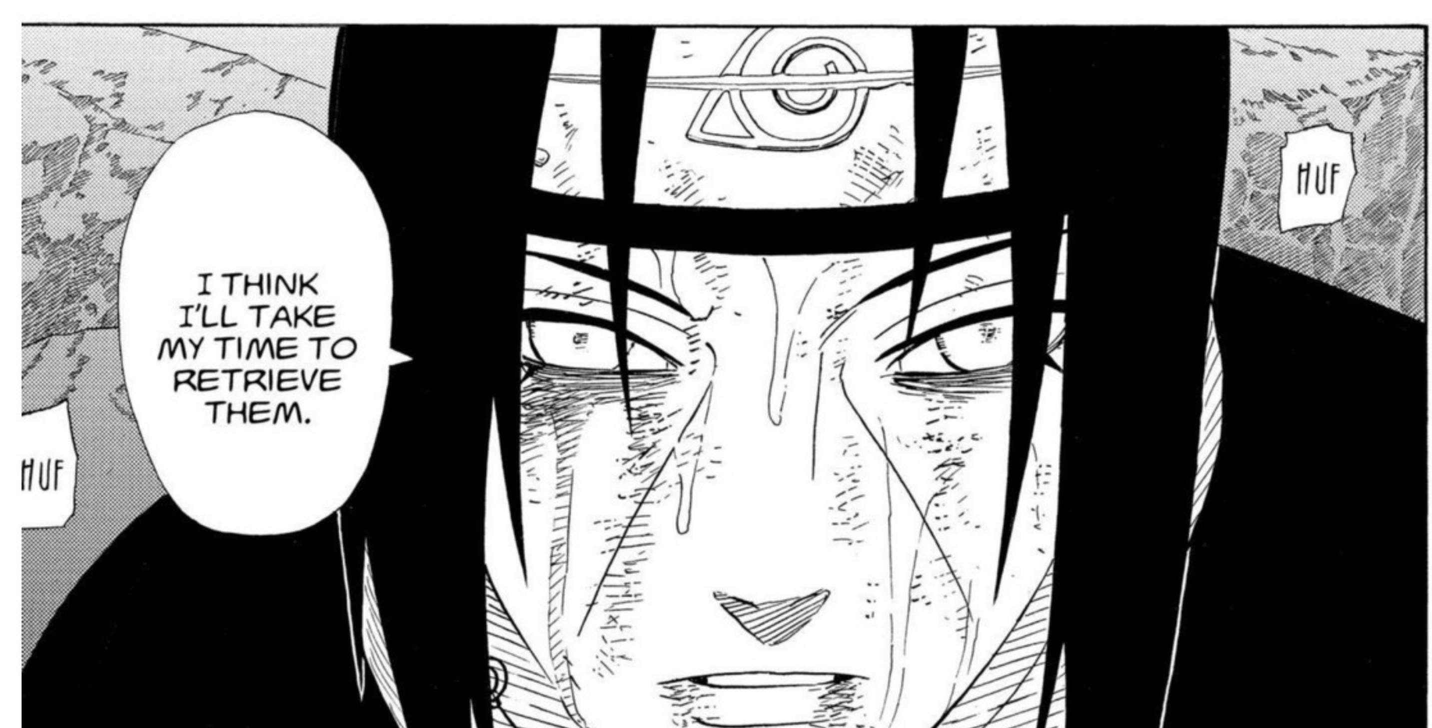

HUF
HUF


SASUKE CAN NO LONGER MAINTAIN HIS SHARIN-GAN...
...AND HE'S BEEN STRIPPED OF OROCHI-MARU...
...SO ITACHI'S WON?



YOUR EYES ARE MINE.

Number 393: My Eyes...!!




!
UGH
UGH!
GYN
?!
HACK!!
WHOA! WHAT?!
SOME-THING'S NOT QUITE RIGHT WITH HIM...?
KLUNK
HACK
COUGH



SWOOO...
WHOOO...
!
KLAK
FTAP
SWOOSH

KER BLAM
HUF
HUF
!
HUF
HUF
WHOOOSH
GULP...

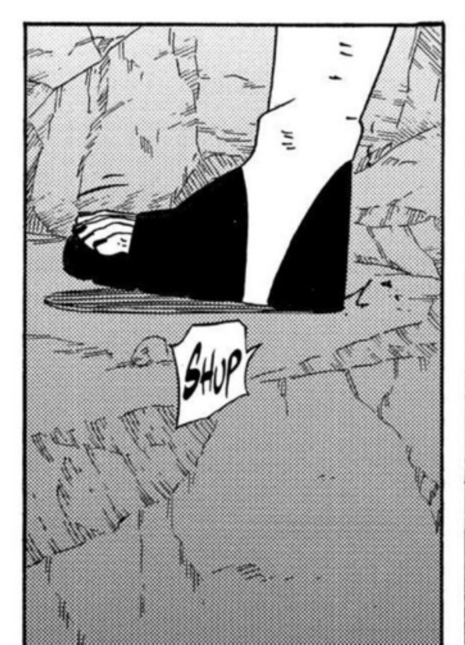
VWEEN
HUF
HUF
HUF





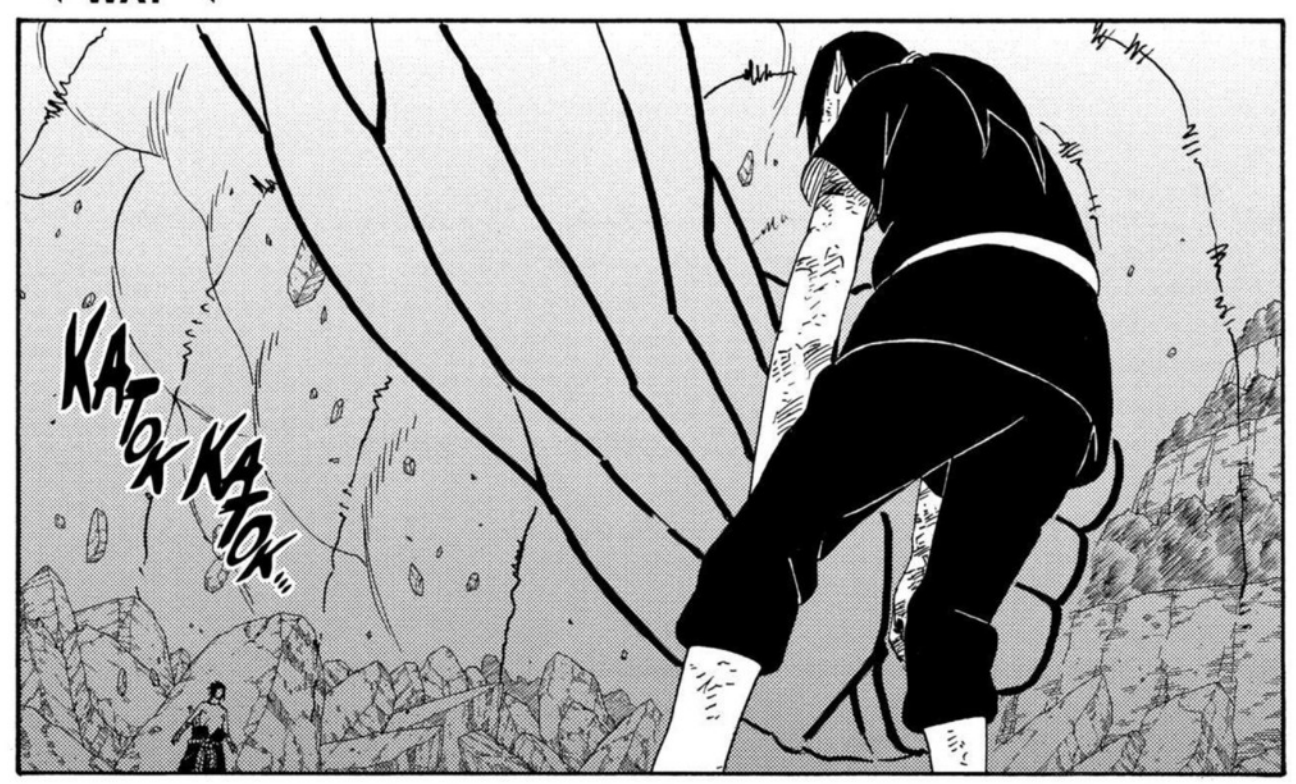


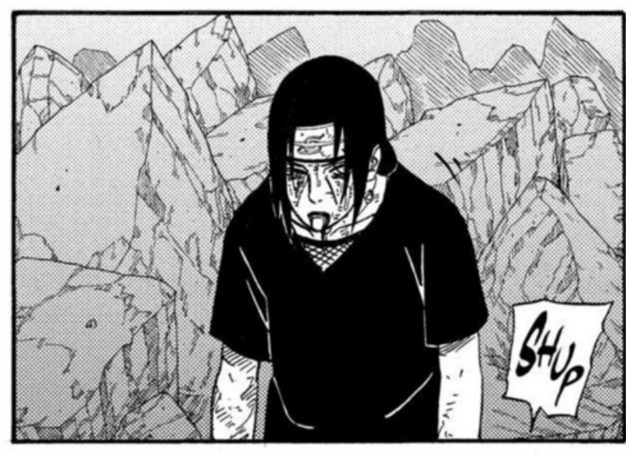


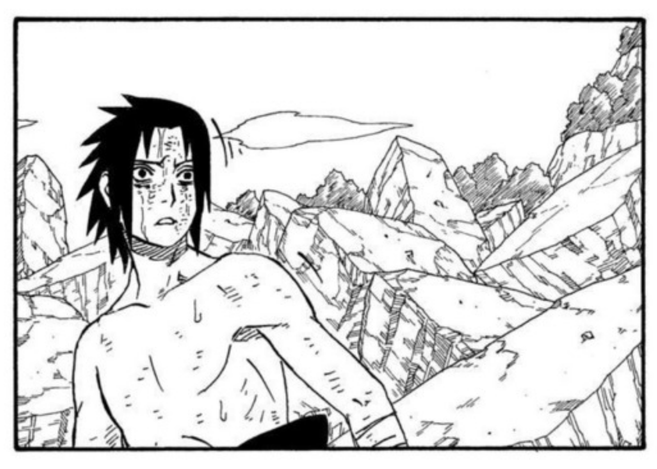



NO!!
FRR
RRROAR!!
BLAM
BLAM
BLAM
BLAM

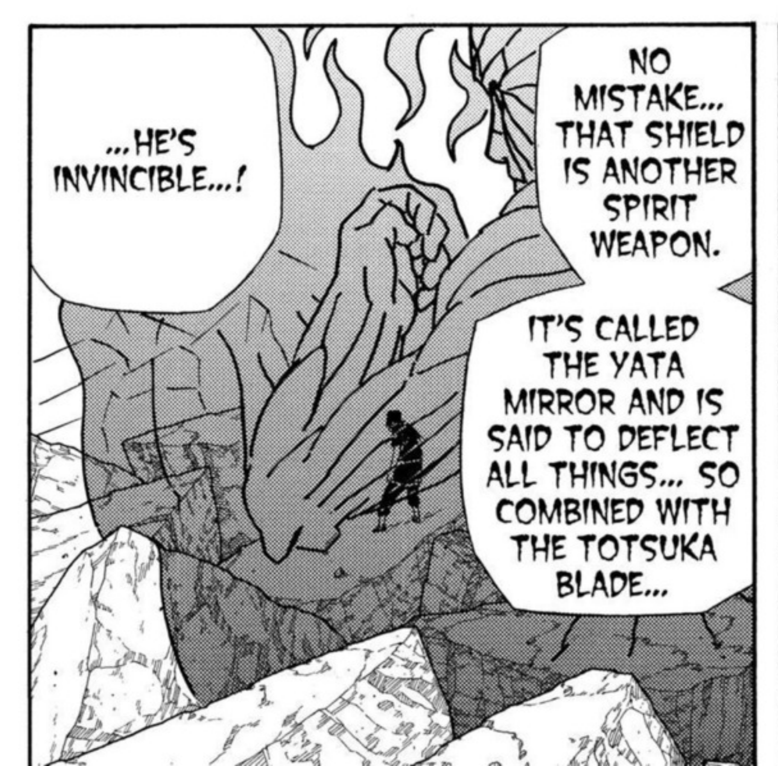

READ THIS WAY


KATOK KATOK...


SHUP




THIS SUSANO'O JUTSU...
...ITS SHIELD IS REPELLING ALL OF SASUKE'S ATTACKS...!


NO MISTAKE... THAT SHIELD IS ANOTHER SPIRIT WEAPON.
IT'S CALLED THE YATA MIRROR AND IS SAID TO DEFLECT ALL THINGS... SO COMBINED WITH THE TOTSUKA BLADE...
...HE'S INVINCIBLE...!

THEY'RE MY EYES...

... MINE...

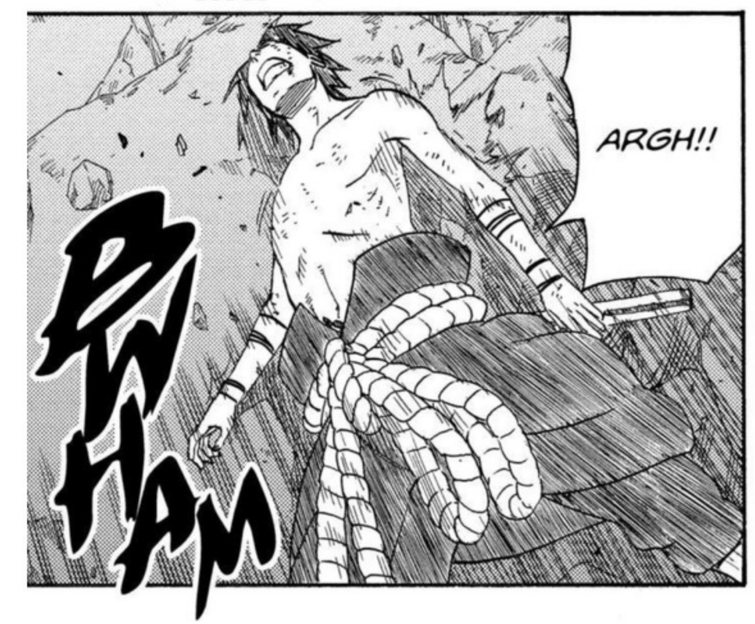
KACHAK

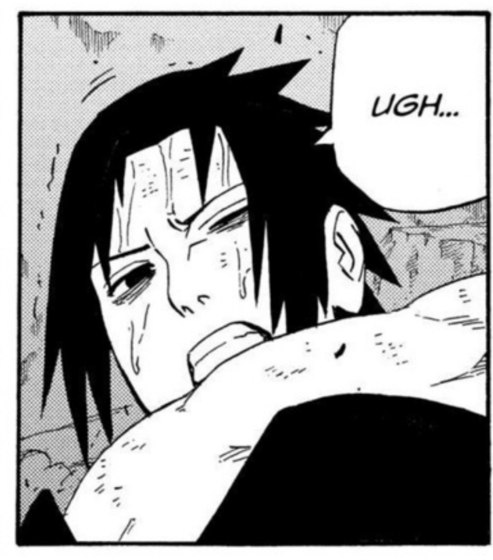
FAP

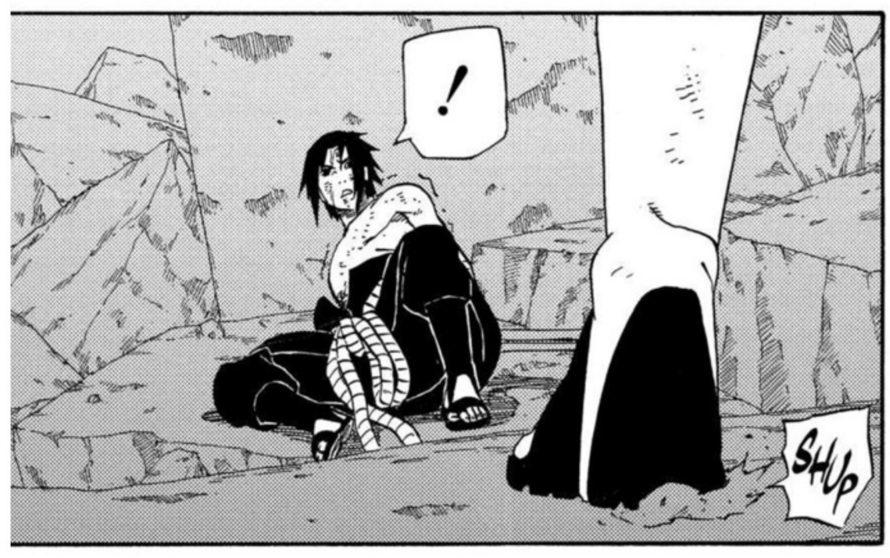
RRRROAR!!


READ
THIS
WAY


K-
KEEN

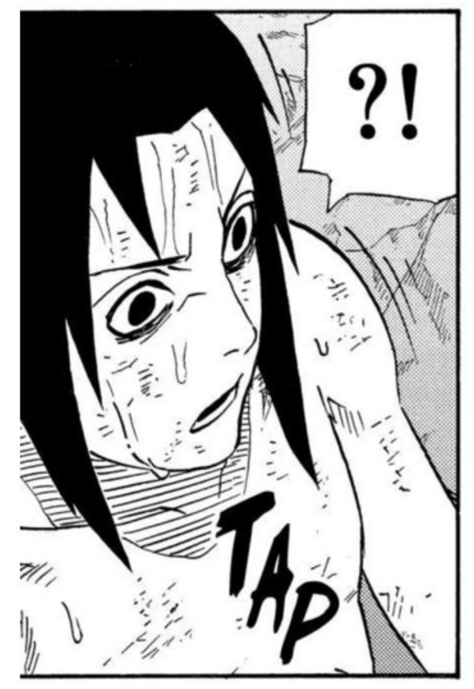

ARGH!!
BWHAM


UGH...


!
SHUP

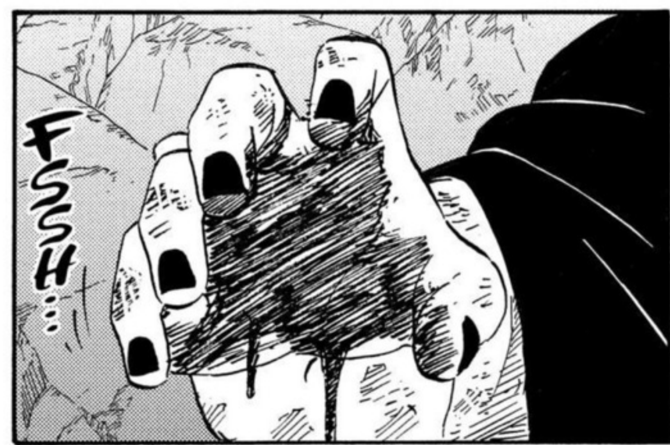

HUF
HUF
UNNH

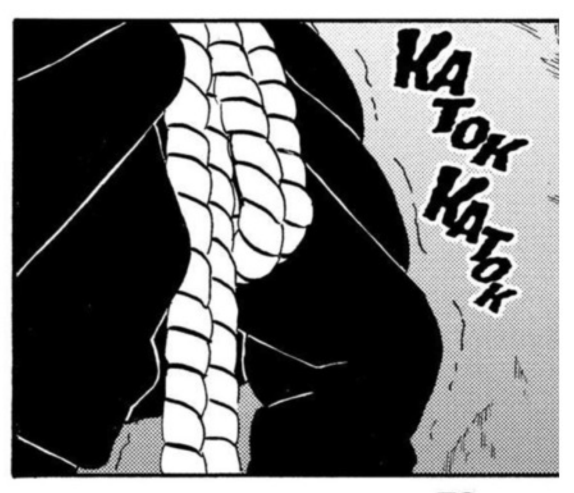

FSH


?!
TAP

A WALL...!
SHUP

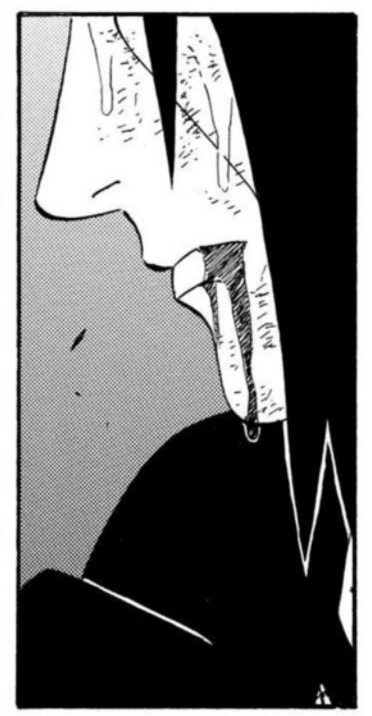
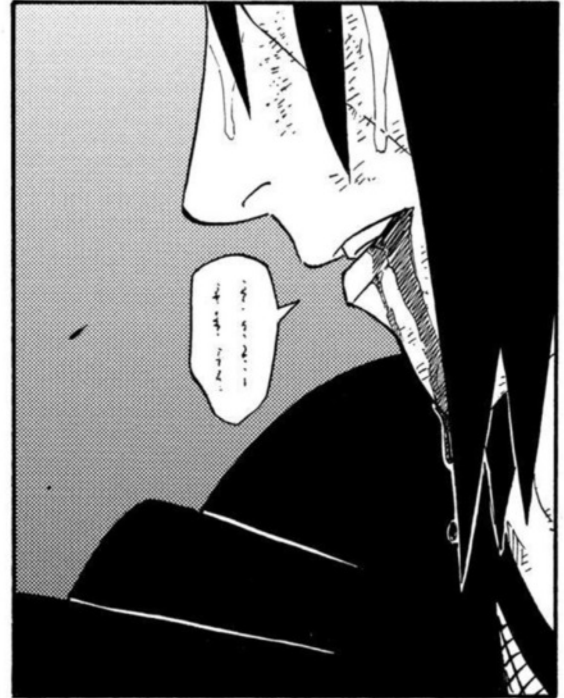
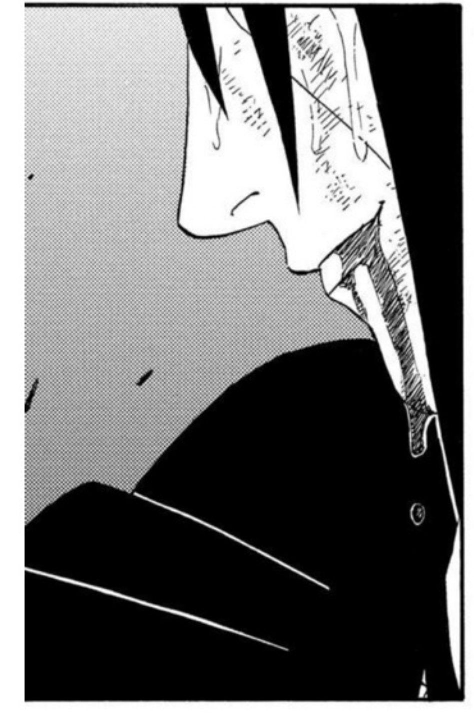






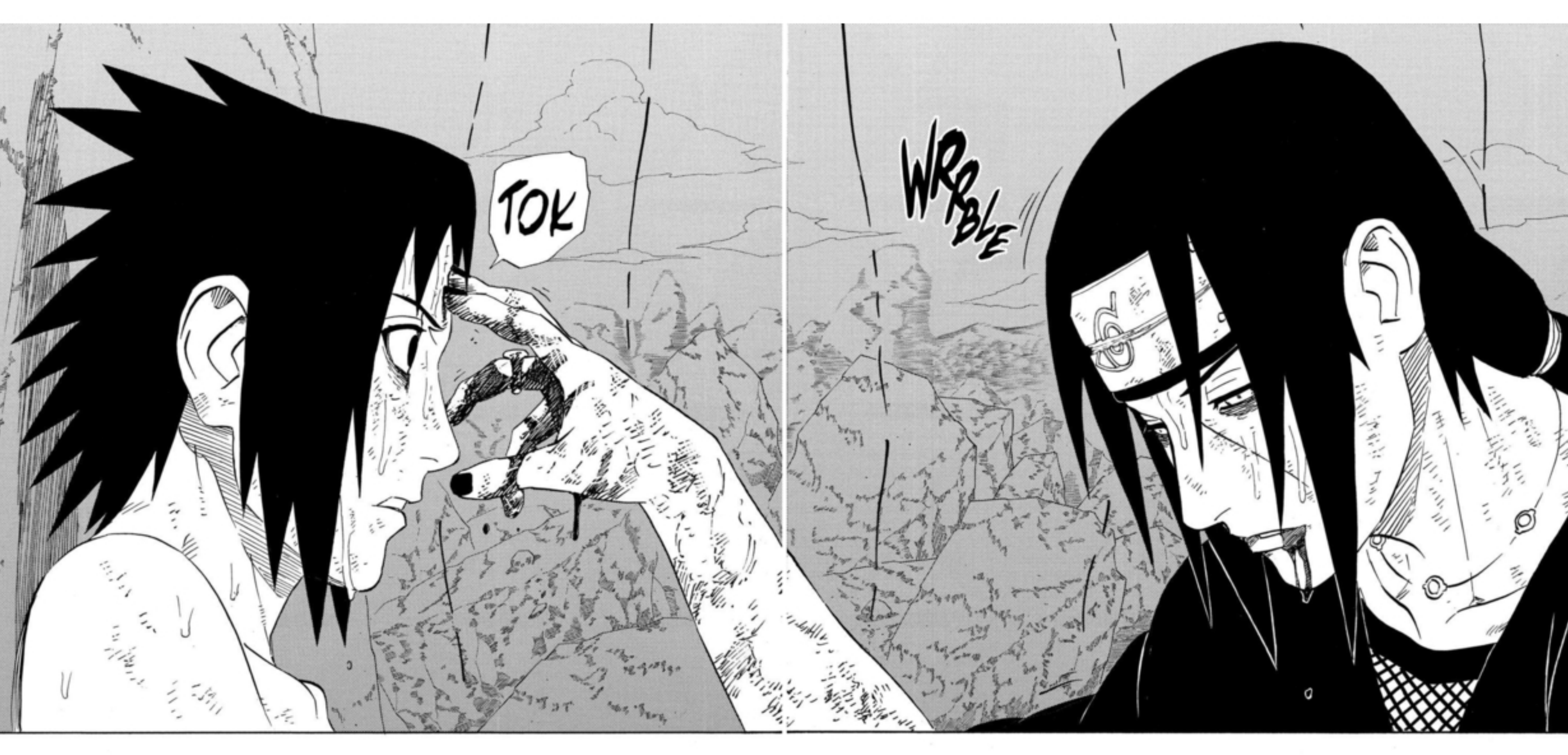


READ THIS WAY



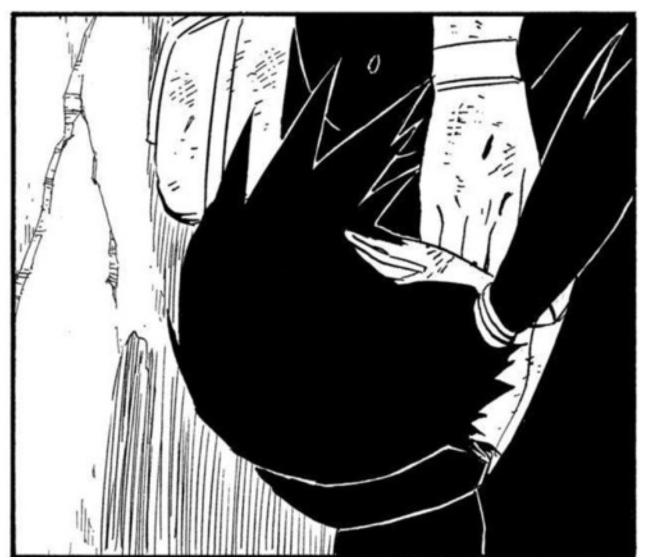


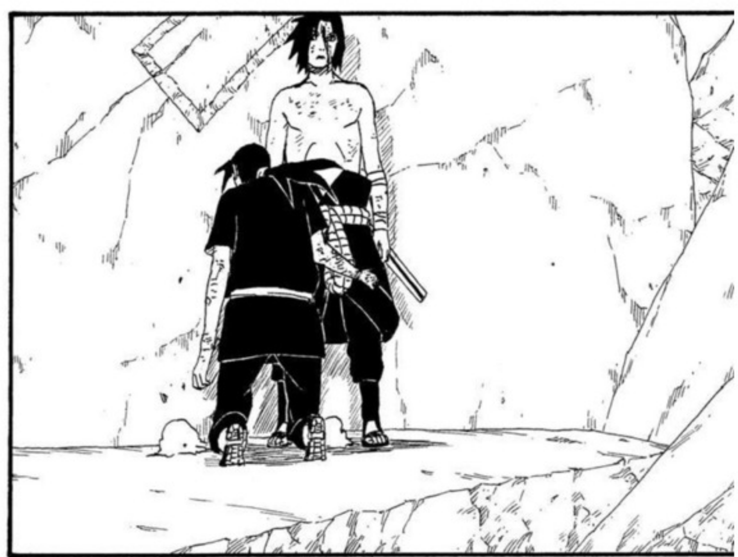


WRBBLE
TOK

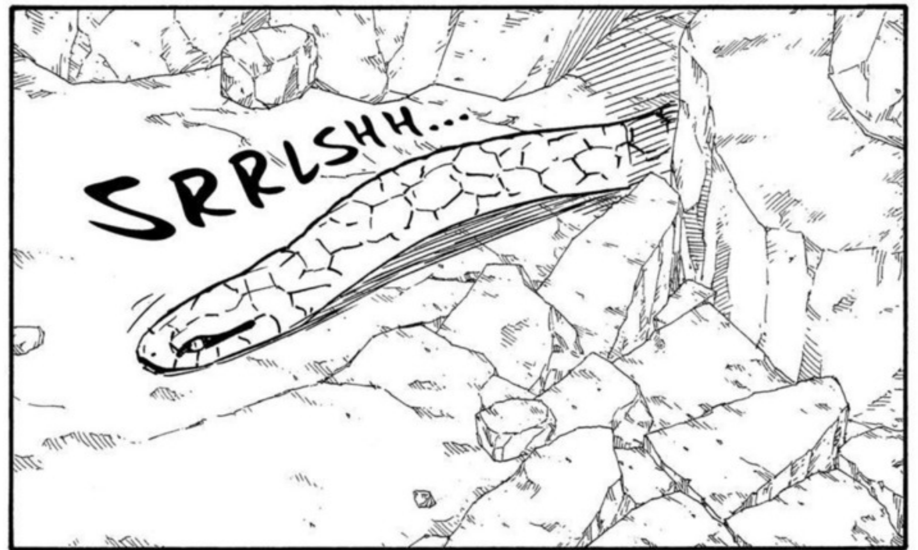



SSSS...

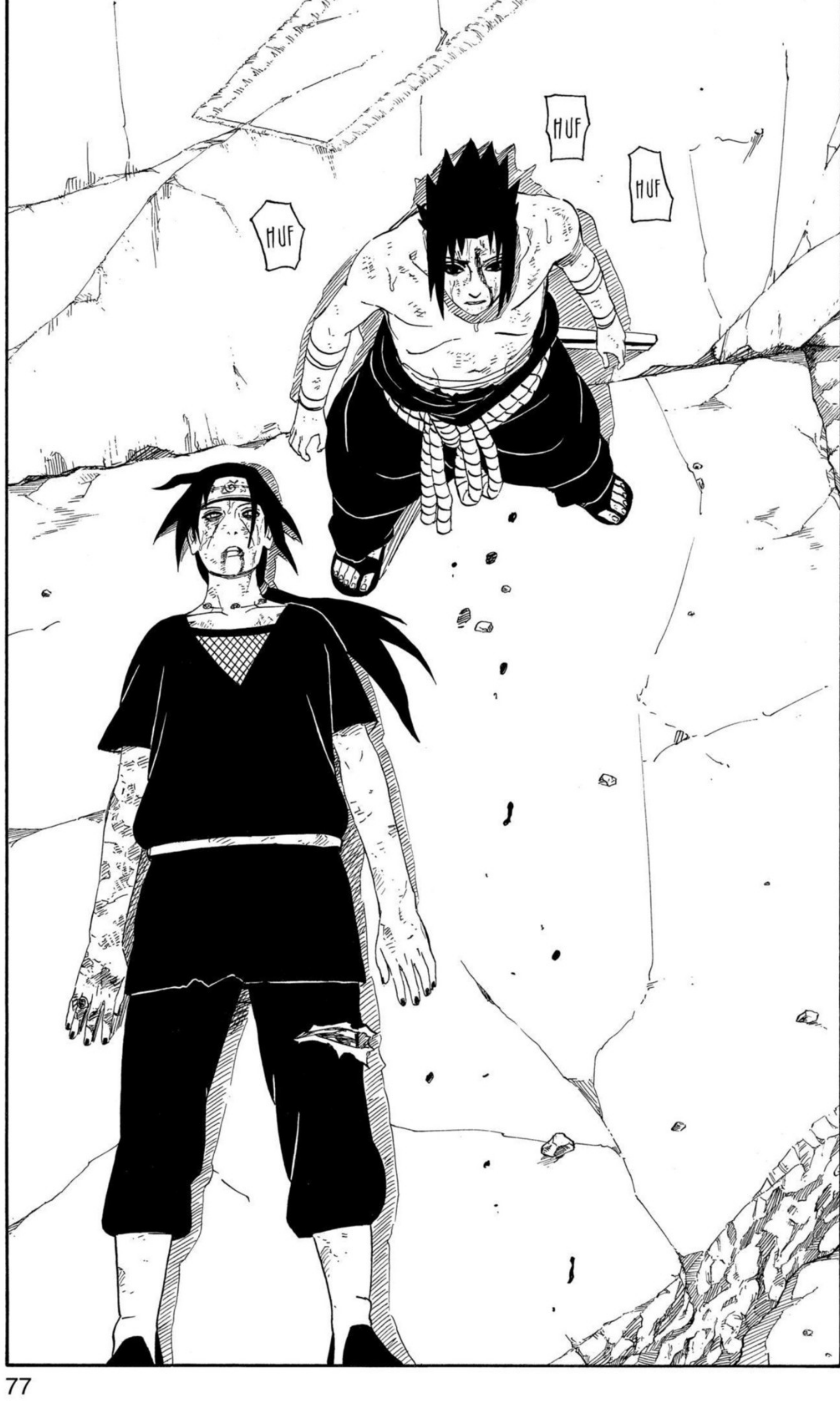

SQUCH
FBRRRR...





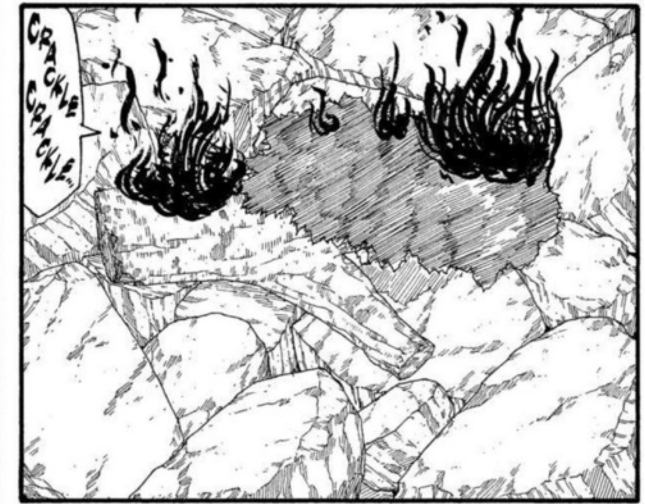

SRRLSHH...



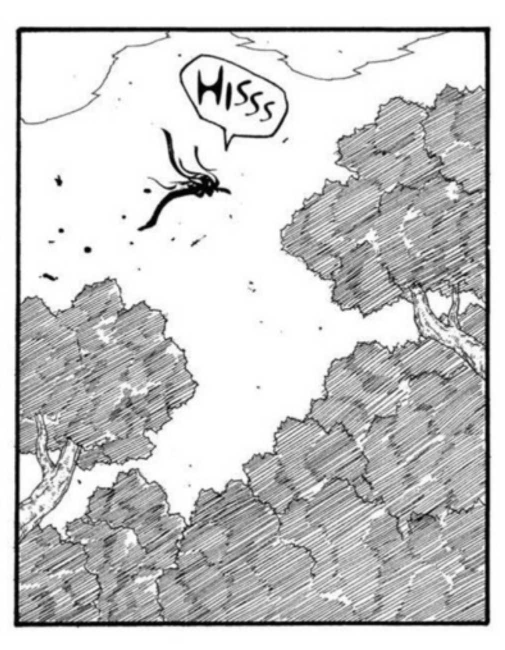

HUF
HUF
HUF



Number 394: Sasuke's Victory

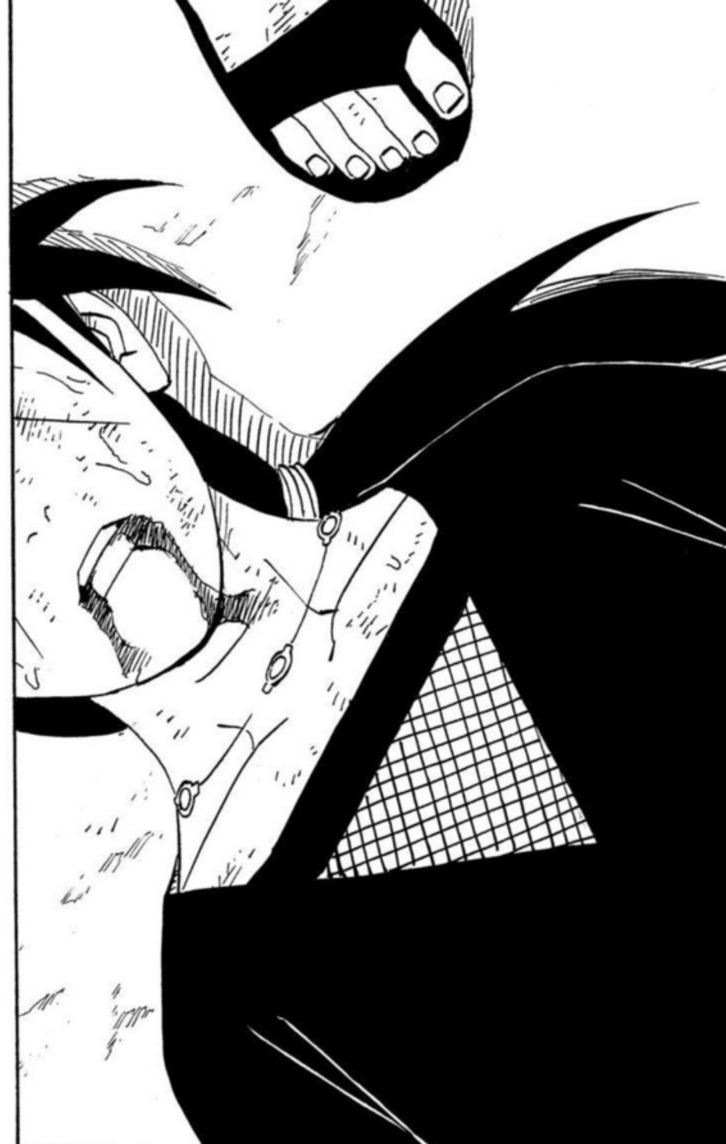


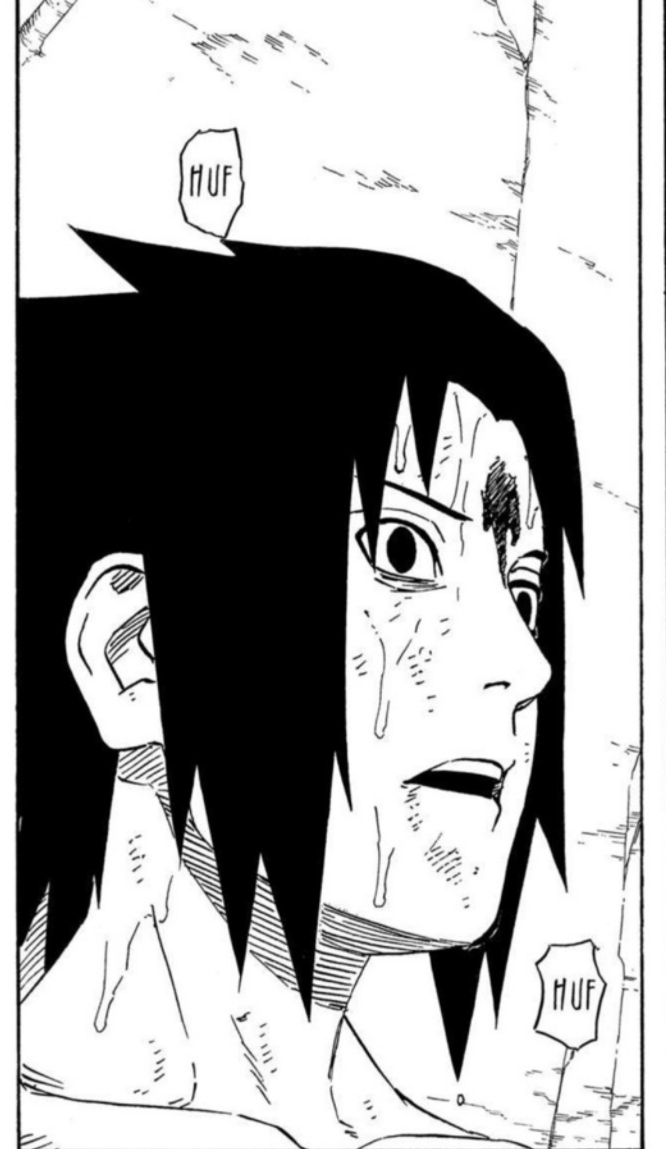




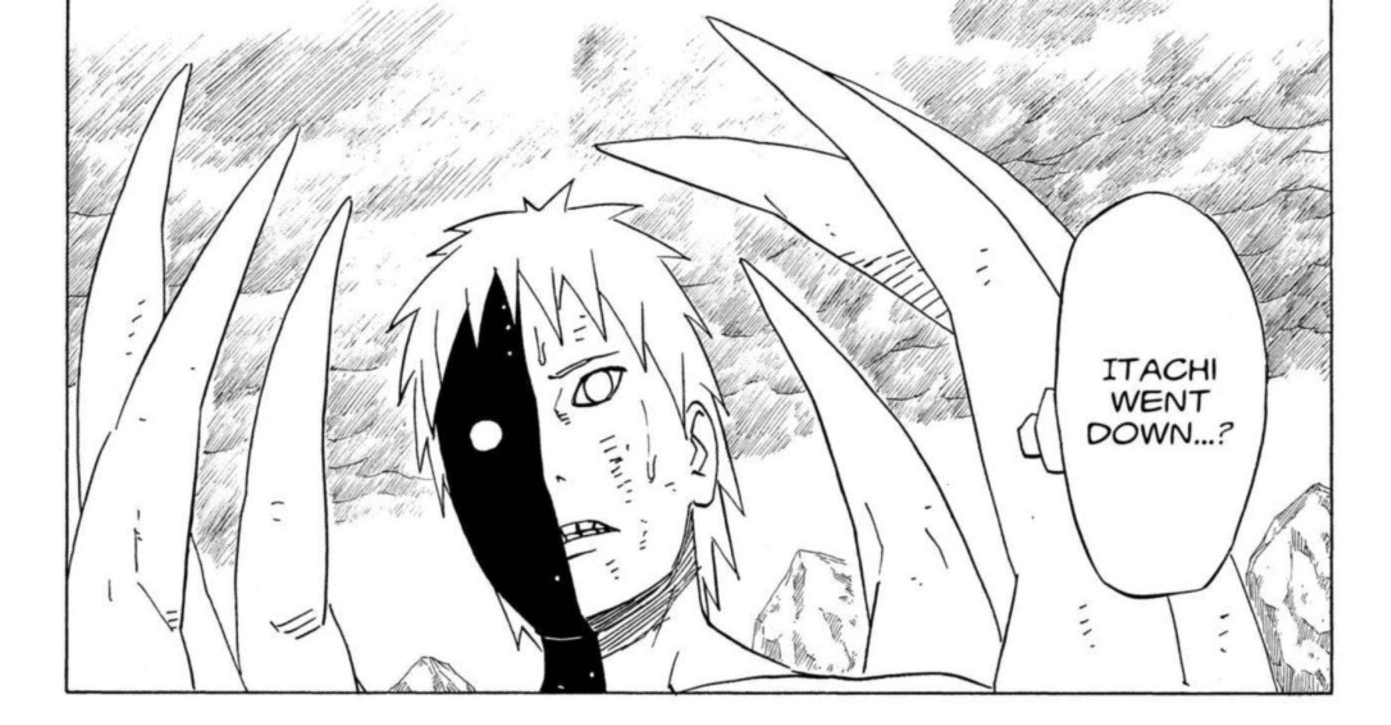








Number 394: Sasuke's Victory

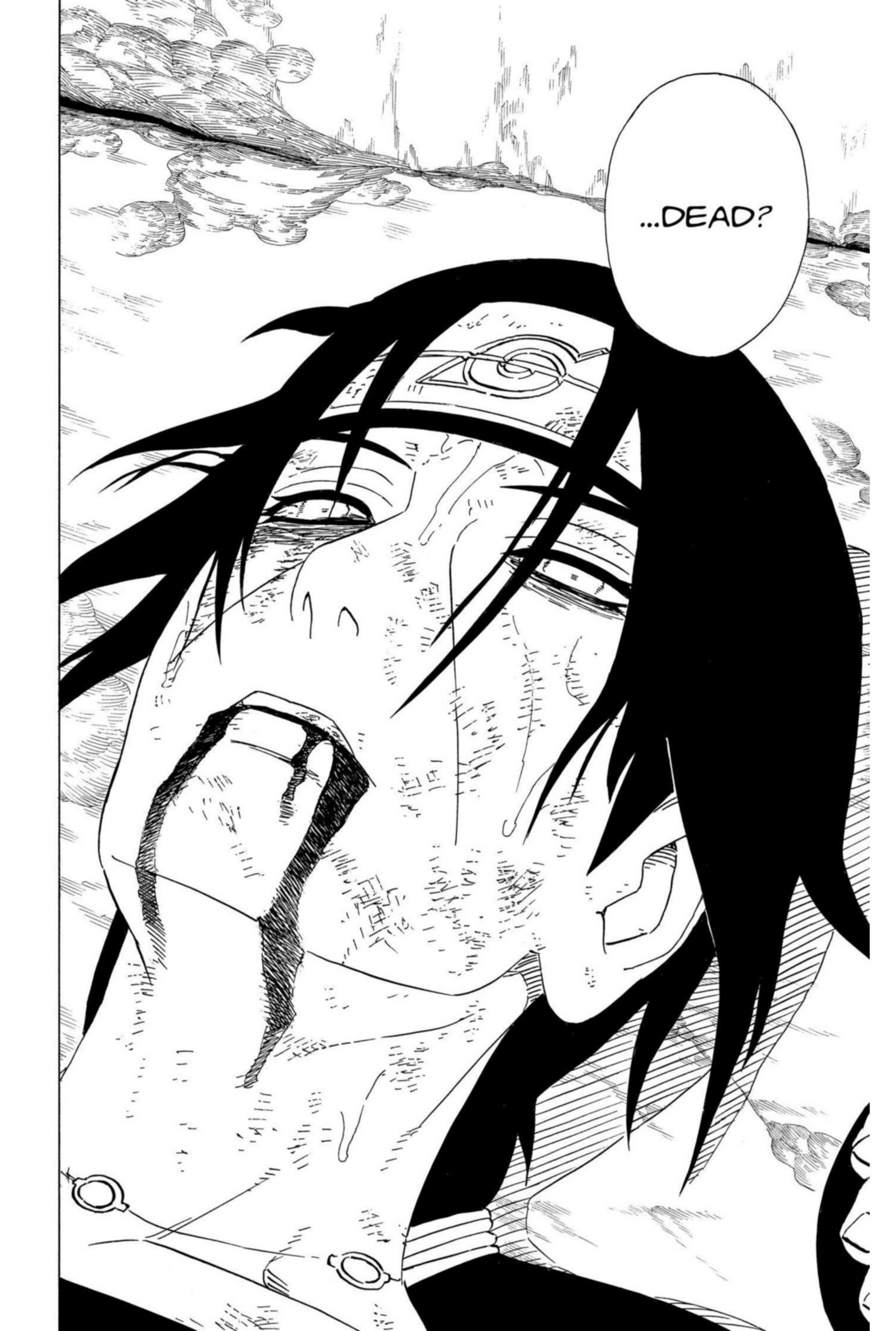

ITACHI WENT DOWN...?

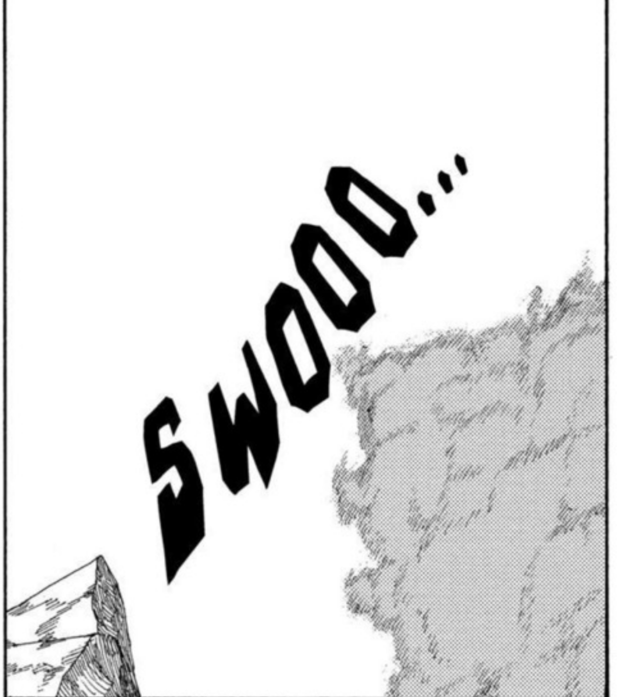

HISS
ZIZZLE...
THRASH THRASH


ZIZZLE...
FLUTTER FLUTTER...

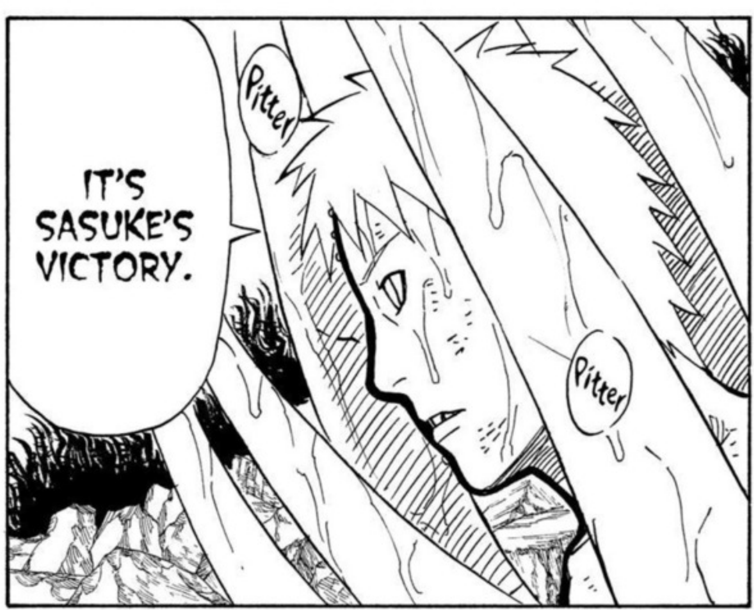

RRRROAR

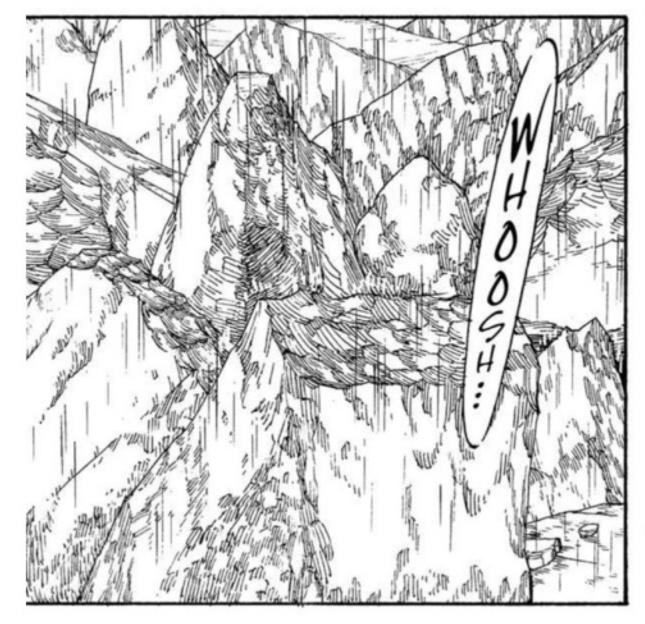

HUH? ...NO WAY...?!
ITACHI'S...


...DEAD?

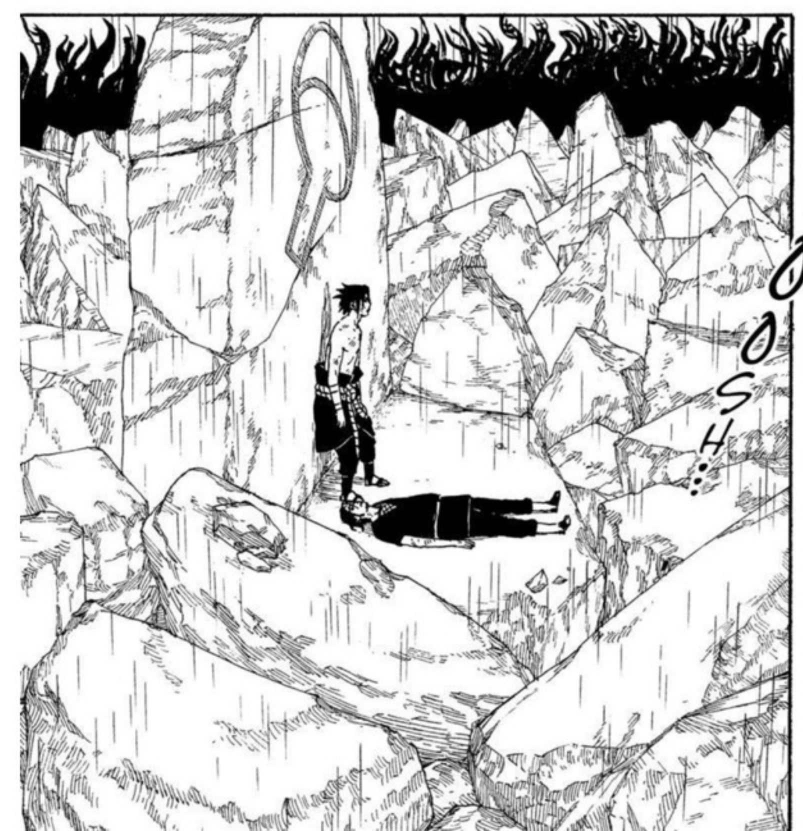

SWOOO...


SWOO-RUMBLE


Pitter
IT'S SASUKE'S VICTORY.
Pitter

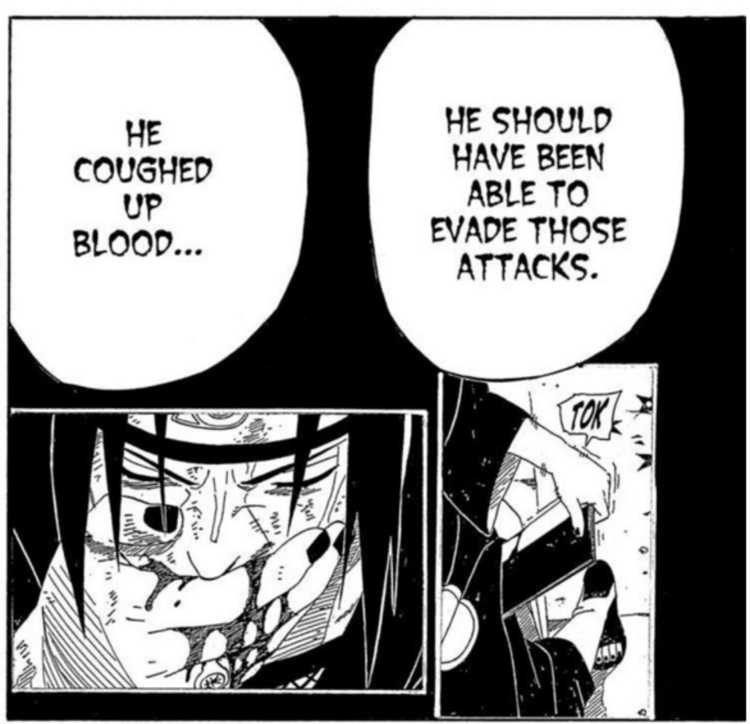

WHOOOSH...

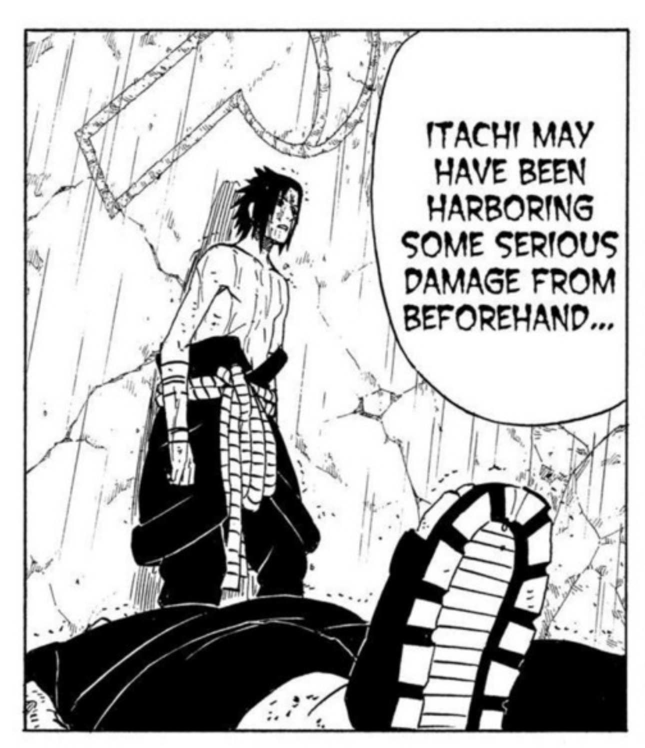

WHOOOSH...
I STILL DON'T GET IT...
GET WHAT?




I KNOW ITACHI'S STRONGER THAN THIS...
HE'S MOVING STRANGELY...
...DON'T YOU THINK SOMETHING'S NOT RIGHT?


FOR SURE...


HE SHOULD HAVE BEEN ABLE TO EVADE THOSE ATTACKS.
HE COUGHED UP BLOOD...
TOK


ITACHI MAY HAVE BEEN HARBORING SOME SERIOUS DAMAGE FROM BEFOREHAND...




DID HE OVERUSE THE SHARINGAN?
NOT SURE... I DON'T THINK WE CAN DRAW ANY CONCLUSIONS...

READ THIS WAY

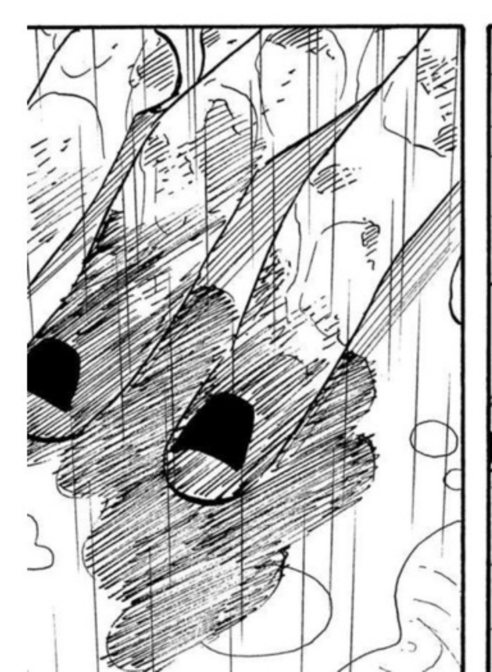




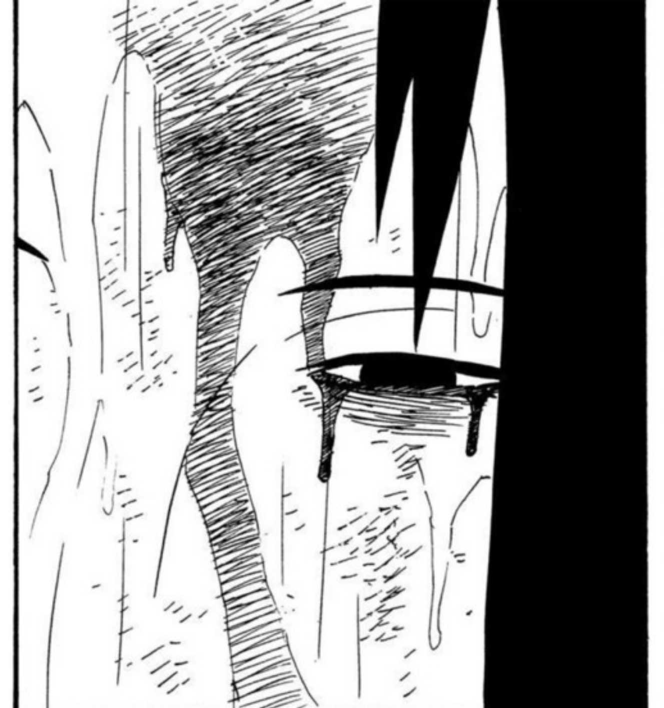




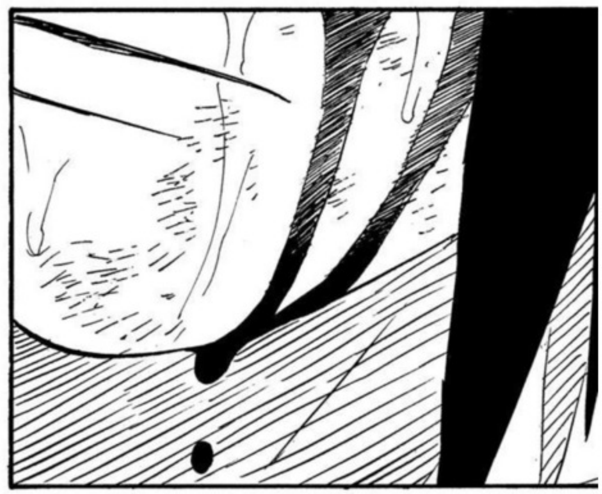






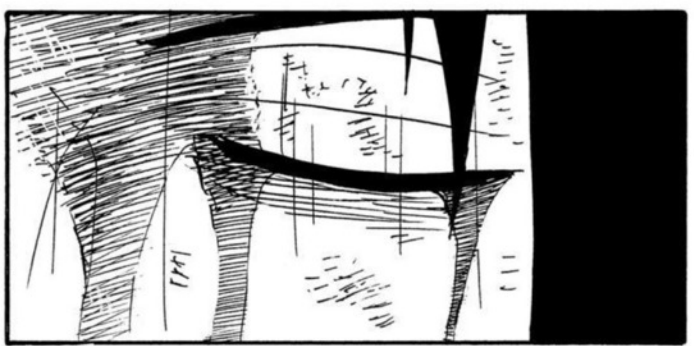
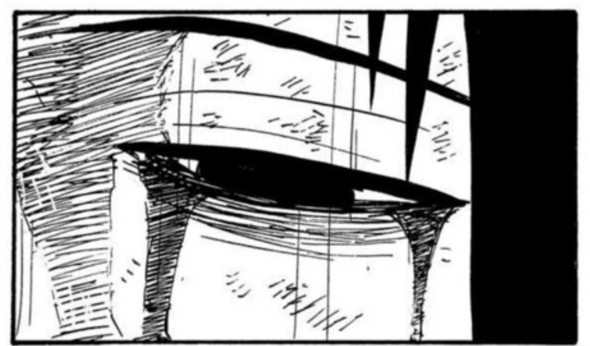


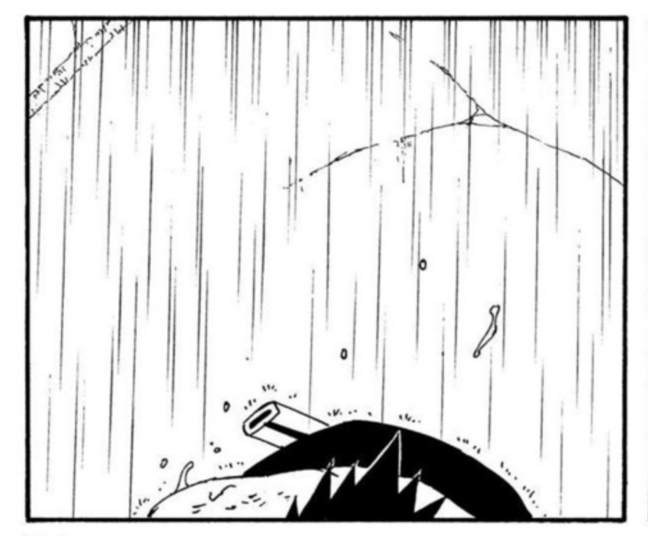
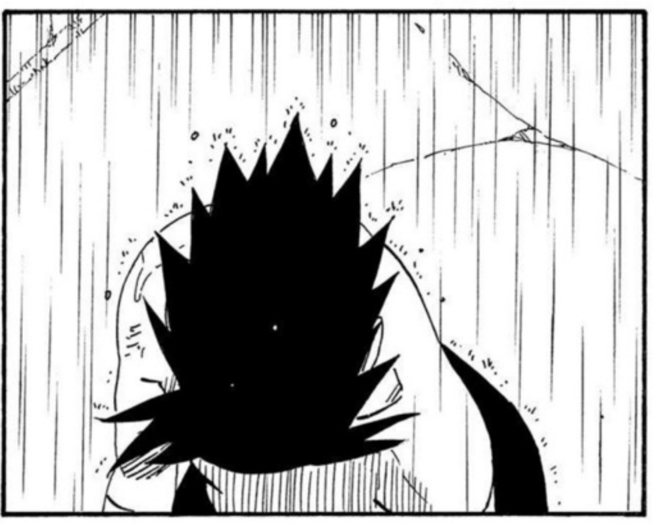
SHF




FZA
SH

RUMBLE
RUMBLE
RUMBLE
RUMBLE

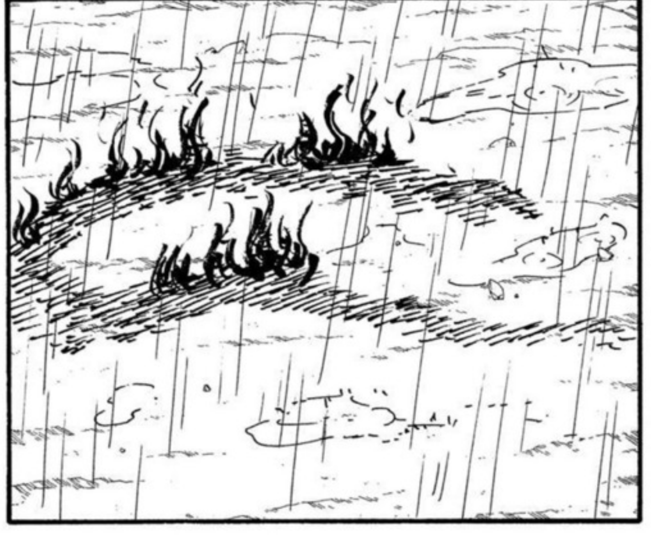
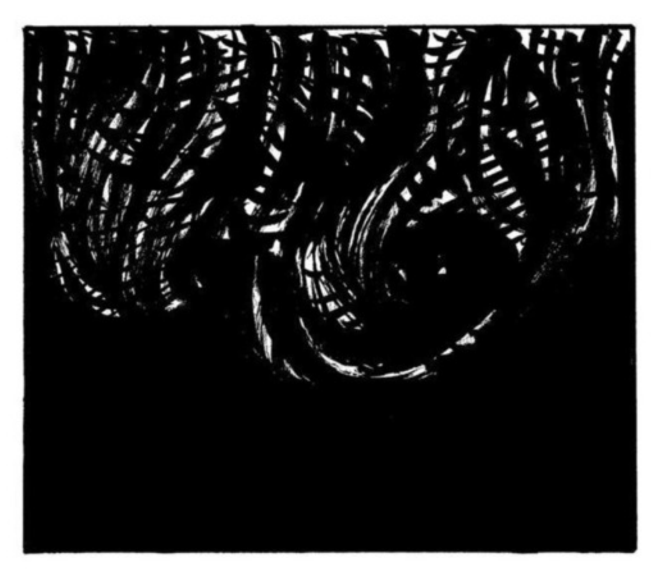
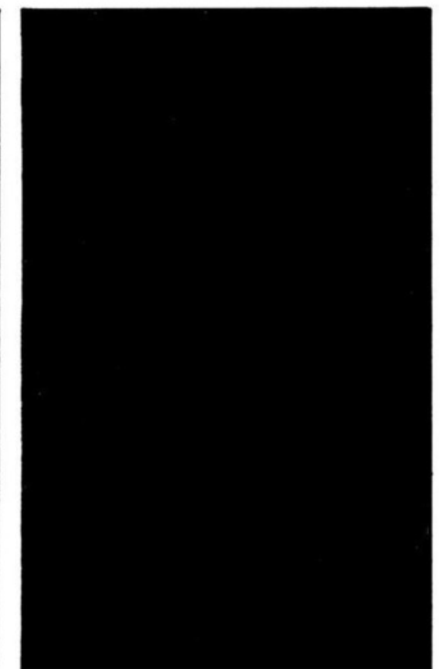
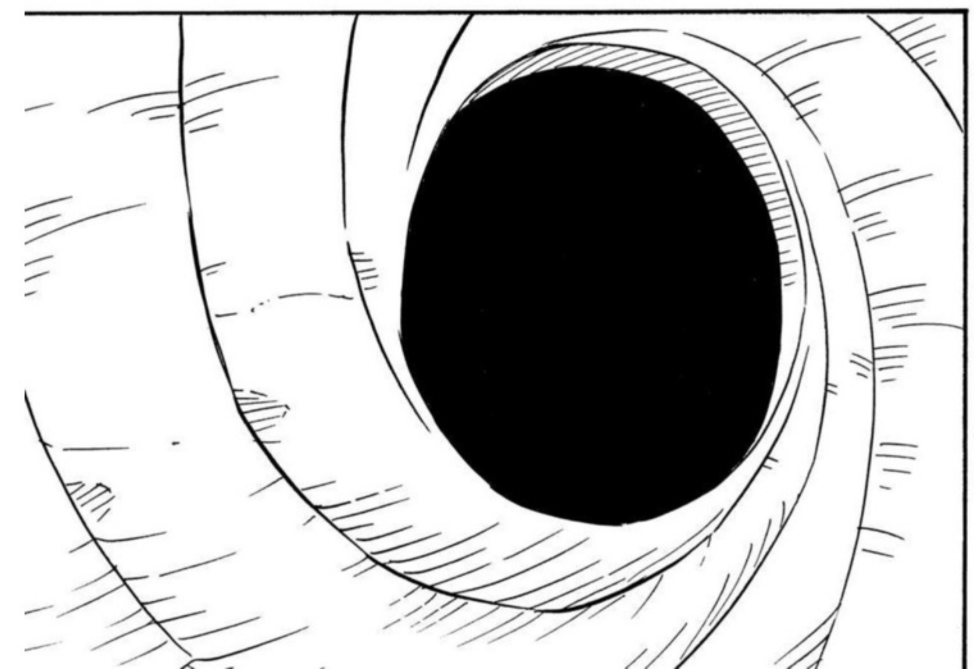



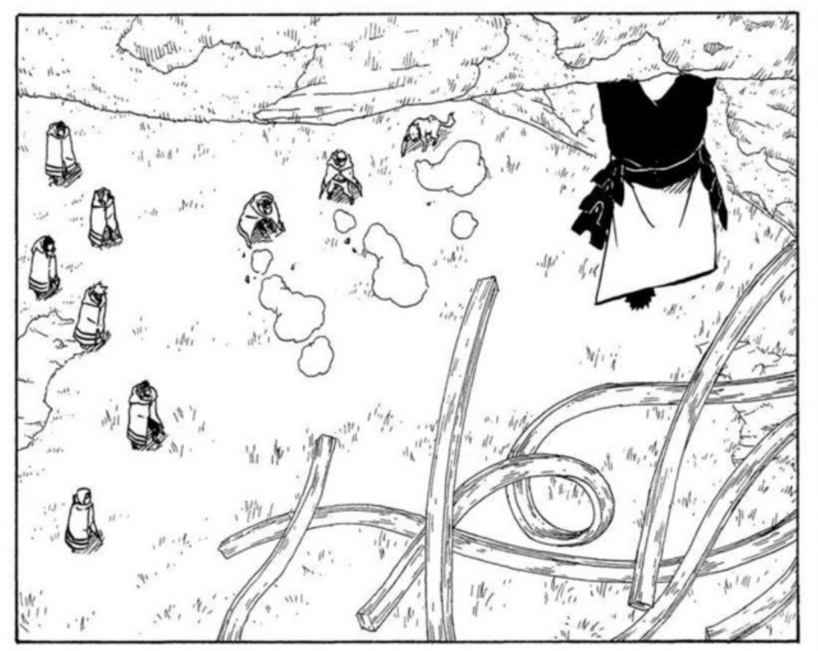
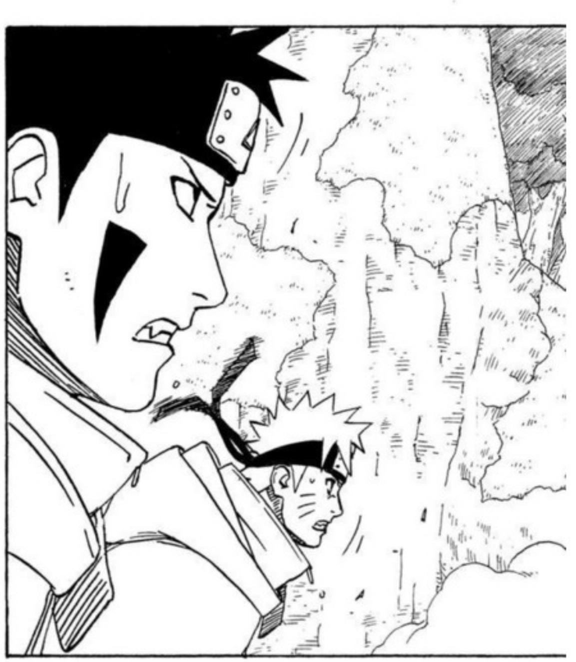
KRSH

WHOOSH


READ
THIS
WAY

RUMBLE RUMBLE RUMBLE...






KRIK KRIK!!

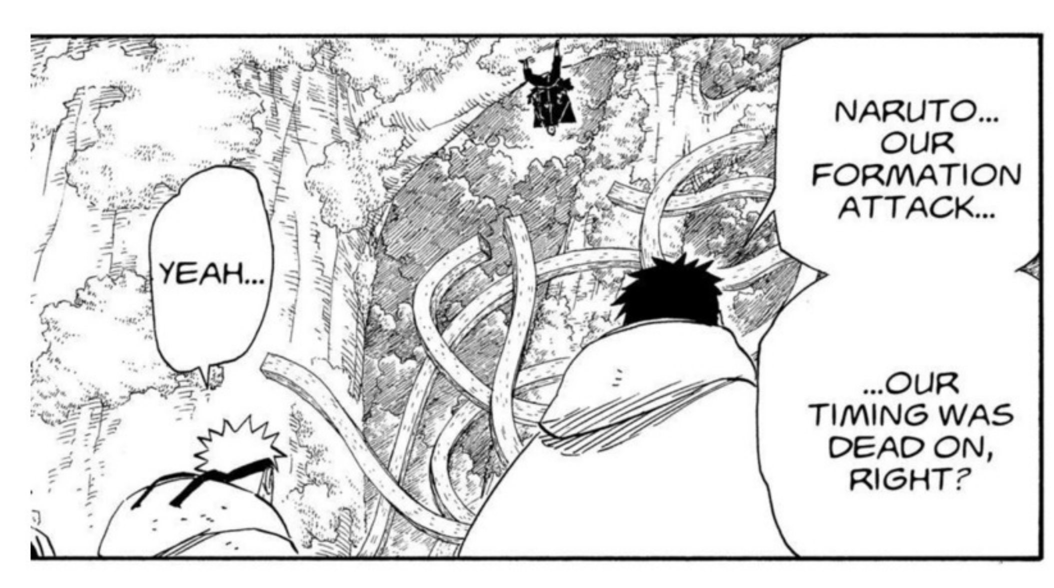

SCREECH




READ THIS WAY


THIS FOR-MATION'S NO GOOD EITHER, HUH...
I CAN'T BELIEVE HE'S BEEN ABLE TO DODGE ALL OF OUR ATTACKS...


... MASTER KAKASHI ...?
YEAH... I KNOW.


?

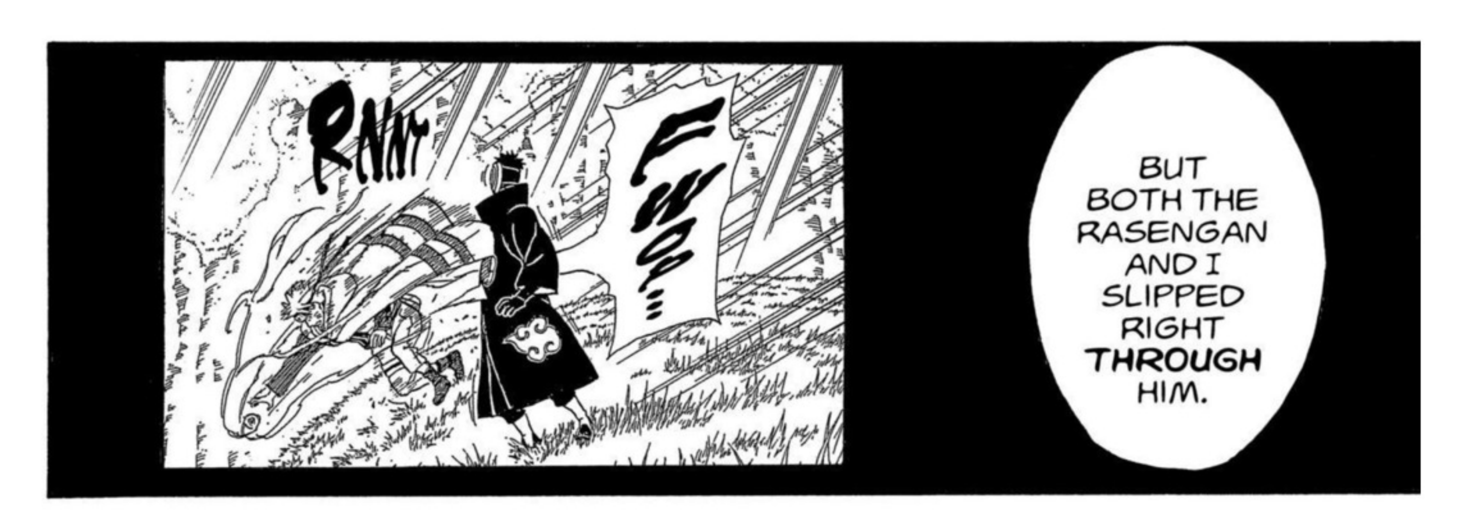

NARUTO... OUR FORMATION ATTACK...
...OUR TIMING WAS DEAD ON, RIGHT?
YEAH...

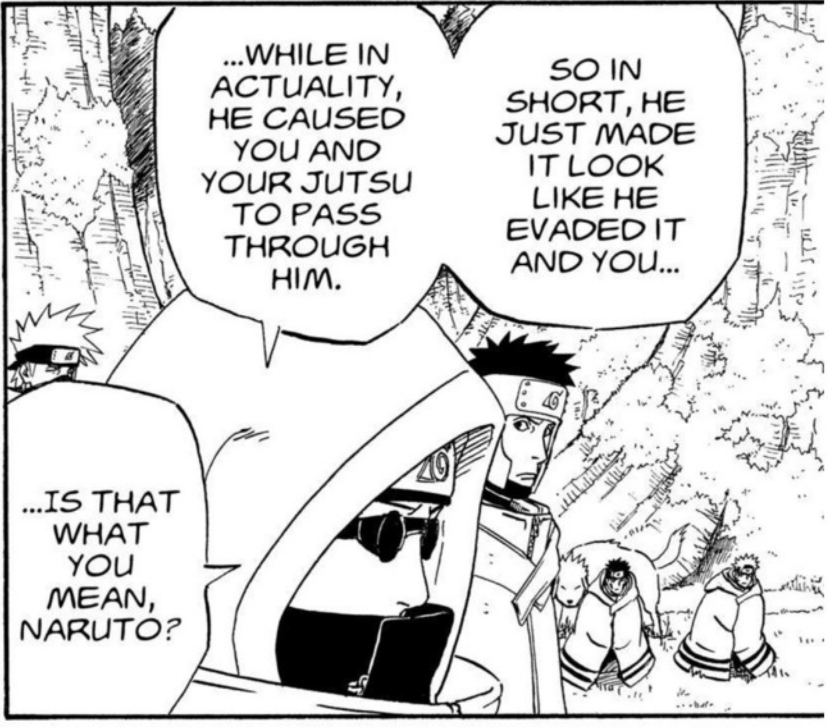

IT SHOULD HAVE WORKED!!
SO HOW WAS HE ABLE TO EVADE IT?!




JUST LIKE WHEN I ATTACKED HIM WITH THE RASENGAN IN THE BE-GINNING.
I KNOW I GOT HIM THEN, TOO...


...I THINK HE DID GET HIT.
EH?


BUT BOTH THE RASENGAN AND I SLIPPED RIGHT **THROUGH** HIM.
FWOO...
RNNT


SO IN SHORT, HE JUST MADE IT LOOK LIKE HE EVADED IT AND YOU...
...WHILE IN ACTUALITY, HE CAUSED YOU AND YOUR JUTSU TO PASS THROUGH HIM.
...IS THAT WHAT YOU MEAN, NARUTO?


OH... HUH? ER...
C'MON, SHINO! QUIT SPEAKING IN RIDDLES!



IT COULD BE A DOPPEL-GANGER...

...OR SOME SORT OF GENJUTSU, WHERE HE'S MAKING US SEE AN ILLUSION OR VISION...

I-I THOUGHT SO TOO AT FIRST, SO I EXPANDED THE RANGE OF MY BYAKUGAN AND SURVEYED THE AREA FOR OTHER CHAKRA...

...BUT THERE'S ONLY ONE OF HIM, AND IT'S OVER THERE...

THERE!

TMP

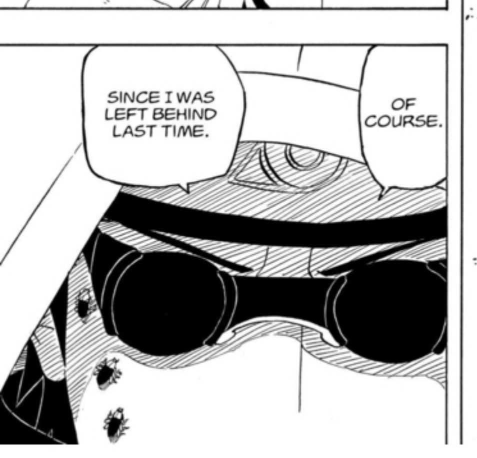
PASS THROUGH... NO WONDER...

WHAT THINK YOU, MASTER KAKASHI?

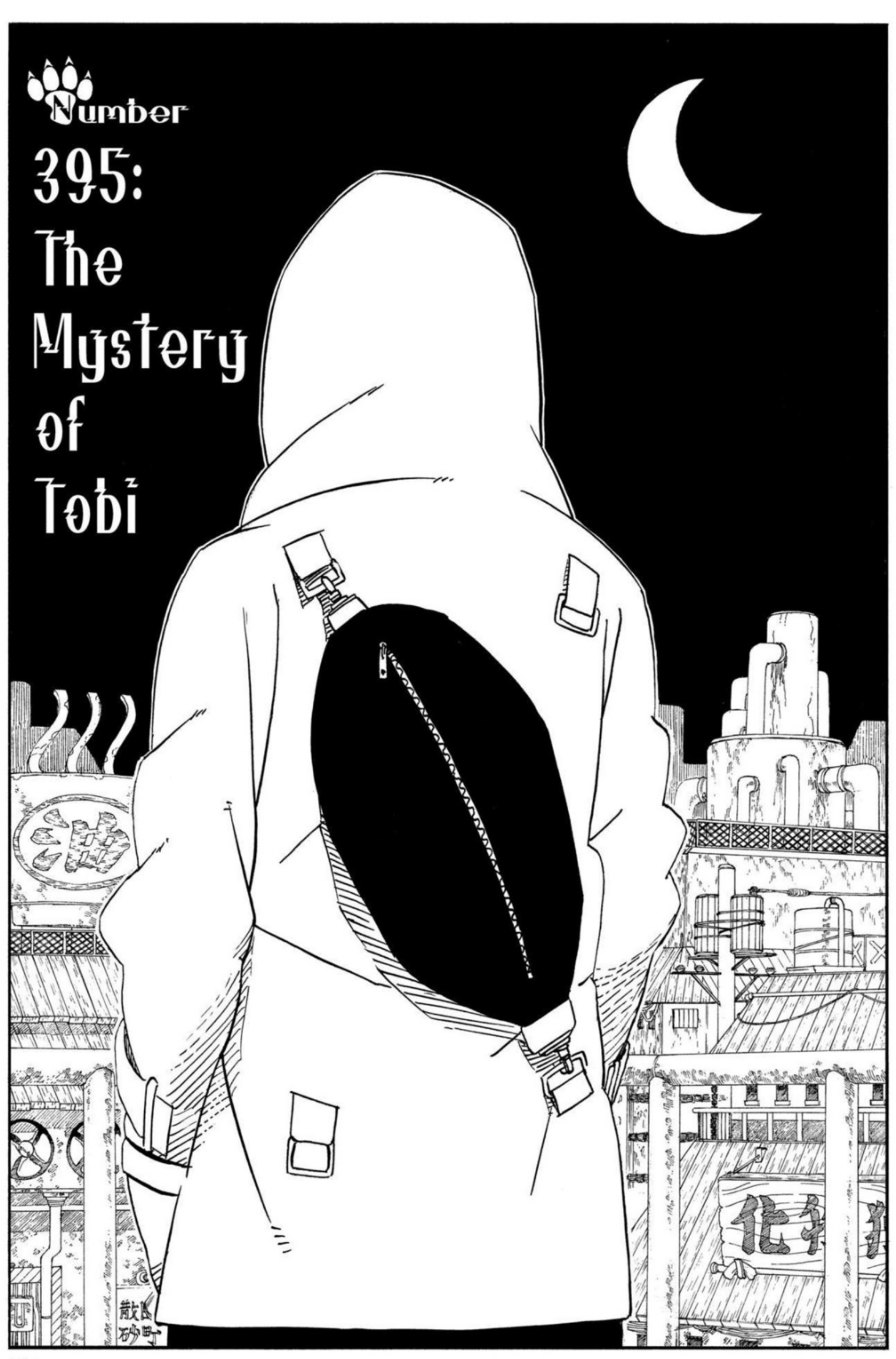


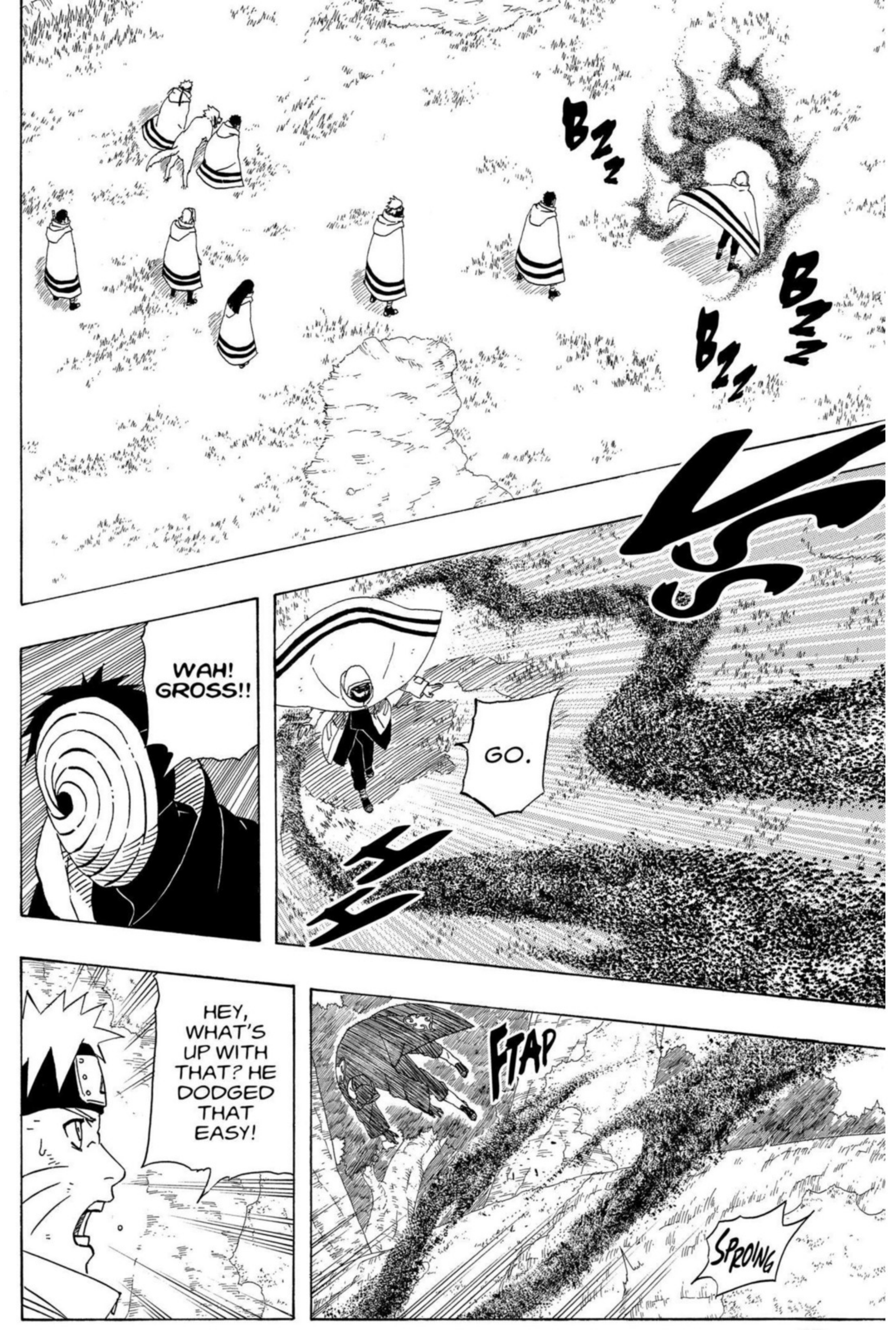



READ THIS WAY
UNDER THESE CIRCUM-STANCES, SECRET TECHNIQUES SUCH AS SHINO'S ARE REAL HELPFUL.
WHOA! YOU'RE OF THE ABURAME CLAN!
ALL WRIGGLY AND GROSS, MAN!


HEH! YOU'RE RARIN' TO GO, FOR ONCE!
OF COURSE.
SINCE I WAS LEFT BEHIND LAST TIME.
BZZRMMM
I KNOW.

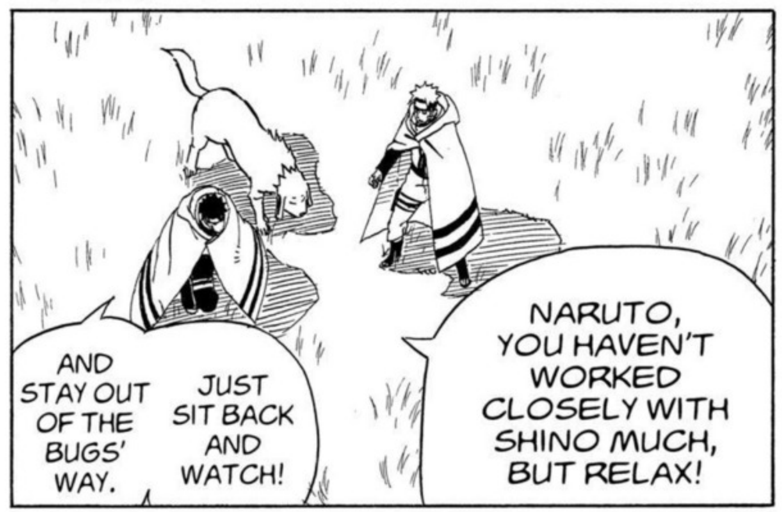

NARUTO


Number
395:
The
Mystery
of
Tobi


BZZ
BZZ
BZZ
VSSH
GO.
WAH! GROSS!!
FTAP
SPROING
HEY, WHAT'S UP WITH THAT? HE DODGED THAT EASY!







DISPERSE.

SKTIK

!

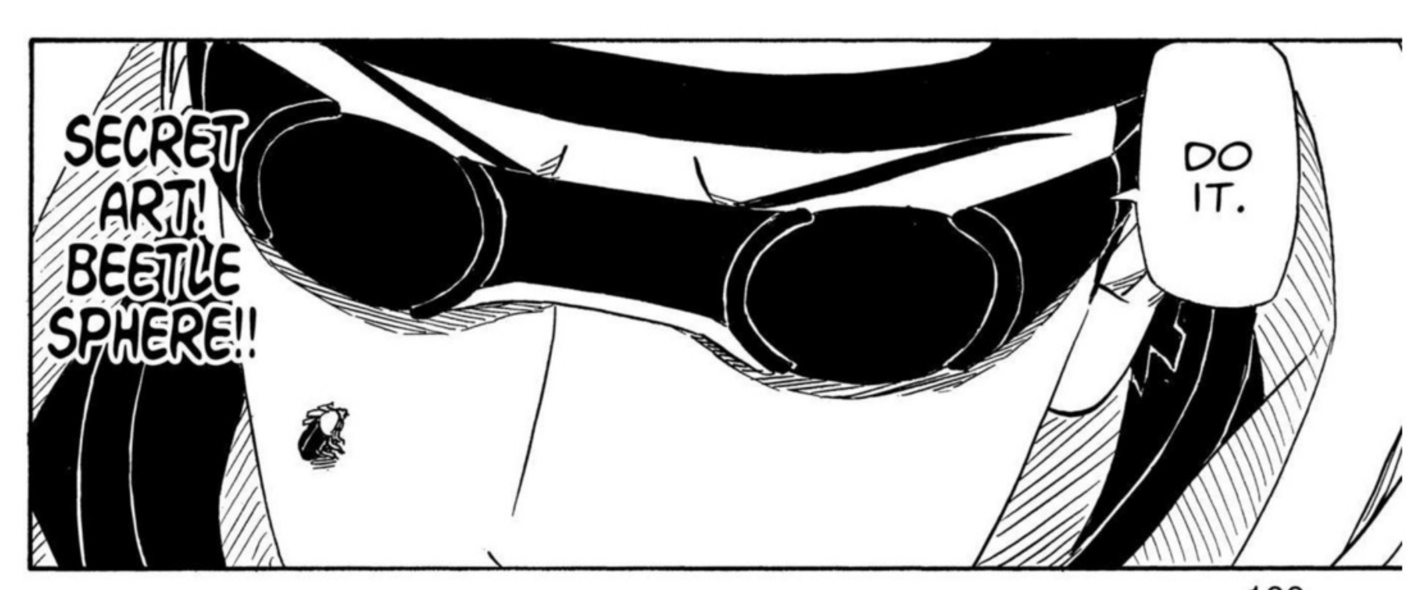
SKTIK


IT'S IMPOSSIBLE TO AVOID ALL OF THE BEETLES.
NOW HE CAN'T GET AWAY.

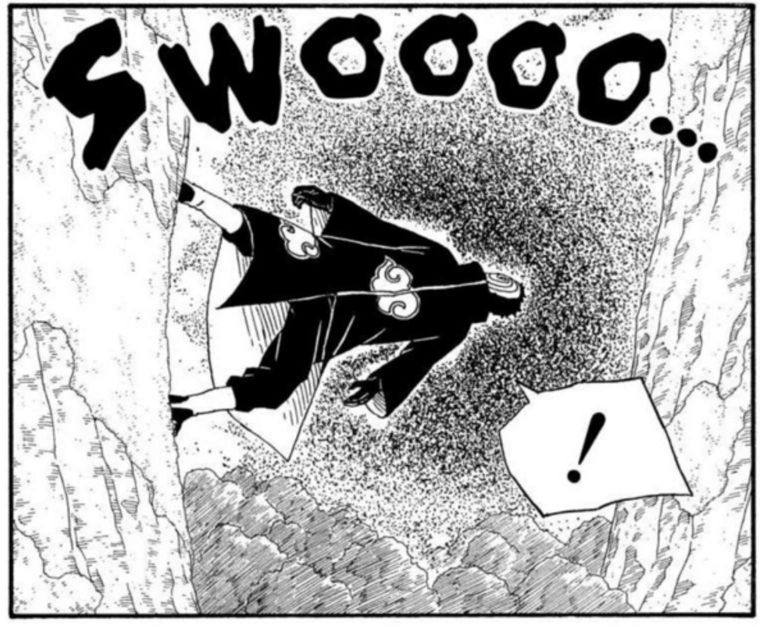



NOW WE'LL BE ABLE TO TELL WHETHER HE'S EVADING...
...OR LETTING OUR JUTSU PASS THROUGH.


WOW!


DO IT.
SECRET ART! BEETLE SPHERE!!


READ
THIS
WAY

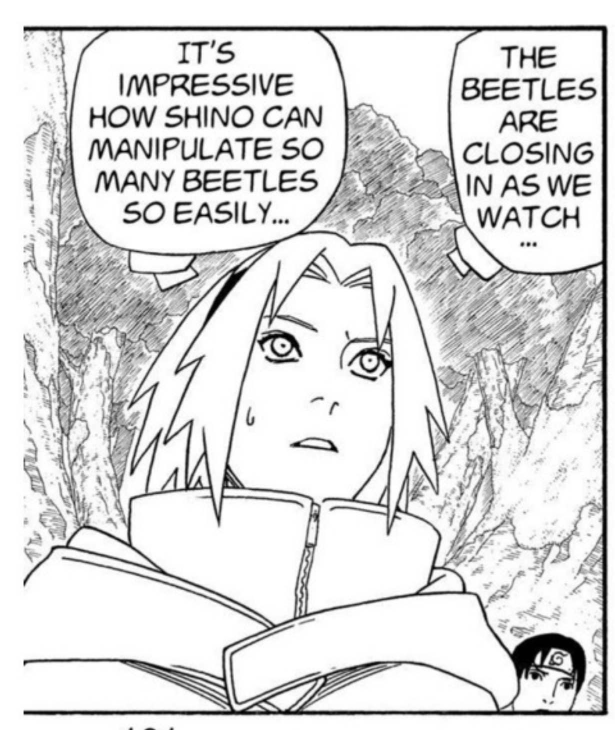

SWOOOO...
!


NICE!
AWE-SOME, SHINO!!


I'LL SETTLE THIS.
SINCE I'VE BEEN ASSIGNED TO THIS MISSION, I MUST TRY TO BE USEFUL.


YEESH, YOU'RE STILL BEARING THAT GRUDGE, AREN'T YOU!


UGH...
BZZZM


THE BEETLES ARE CLOSING IN AS WE WATCH...
IT'S IMPRESSIVE HOW SHINO CAN MANIPULATE SO MANY BEETLES SO EASILY...

SWOOO


WELL, HINATA?

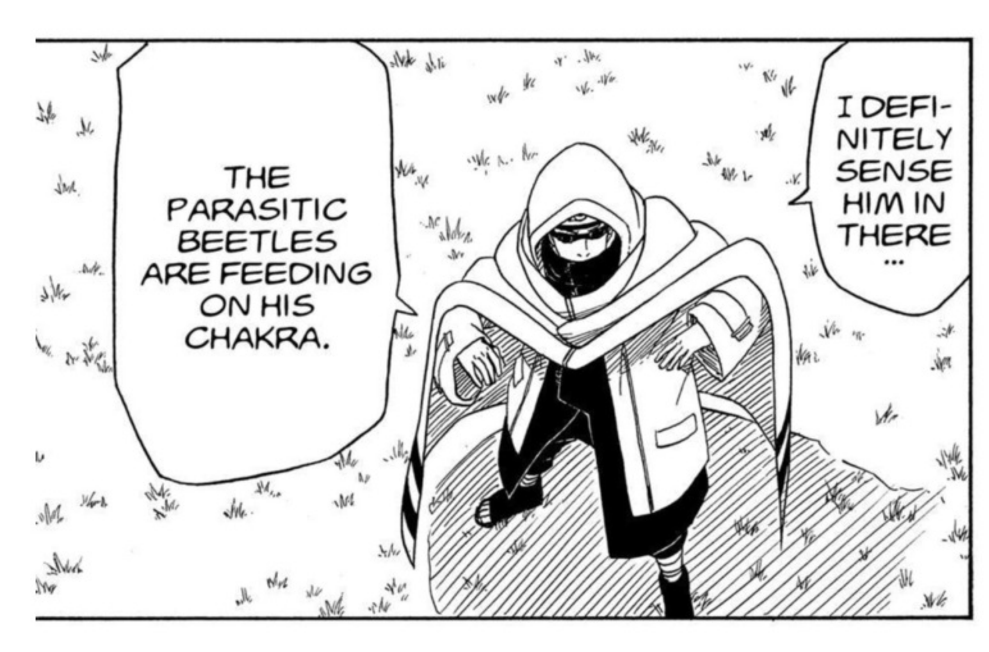

Y-YES, SIR! CONFIRMING THE TARGET'S CHAKRA!
HE'S DEFINITELY INSIDE THE SWARM OF SHINO'S BEETLES.


YAMATO!
FWP
ROGER!
FWP


READ THIS WAY


READY TO GO WHENEVER YOU ARE!
FWOOOO
FWOOOOO


WELL, SHINO?


I DEFINITELY SENSE HIM IN THERE...
THE PARASITIC BEETLES ARE FEEDING ON HIS CHAKRA.

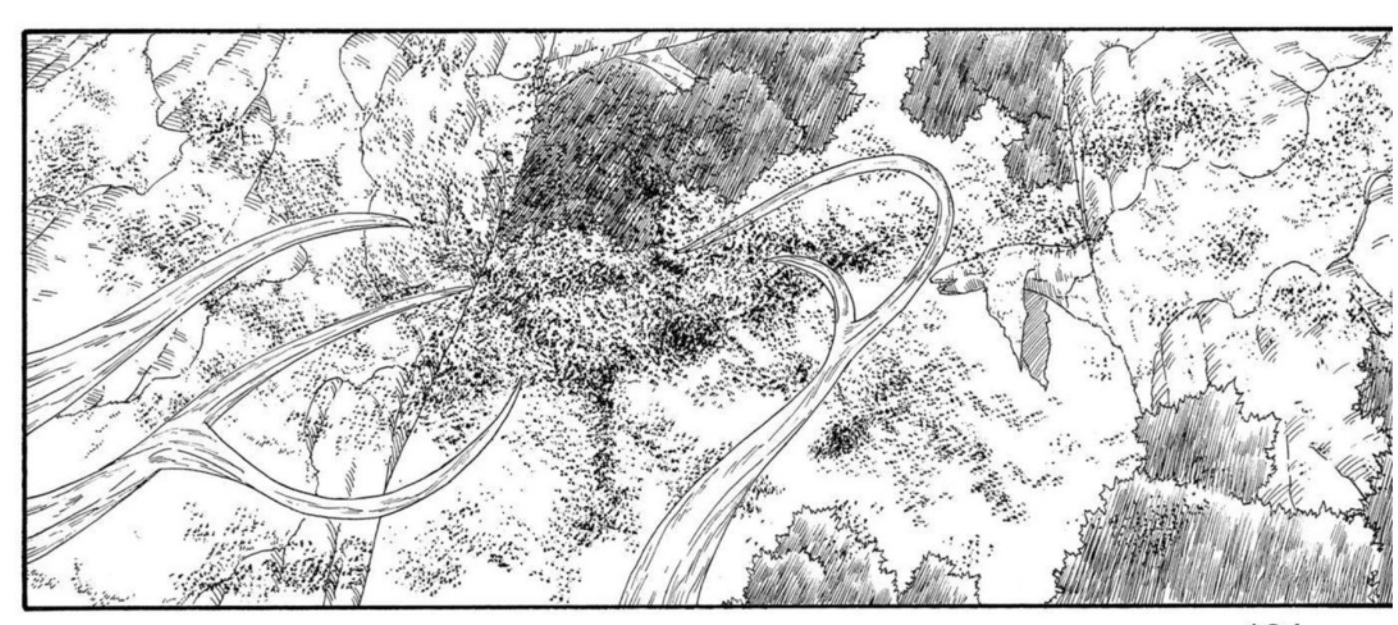

ALL RIGHT! JUST SUCK HIM DRY, THEN!


?!

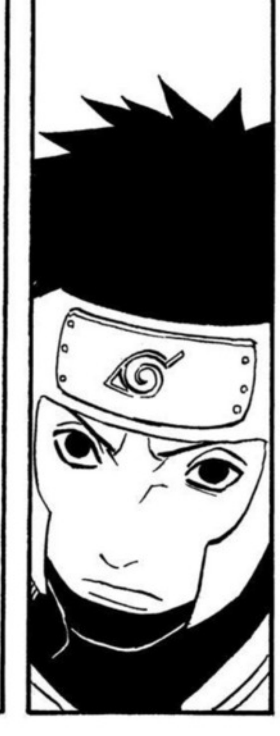

KERPLOP

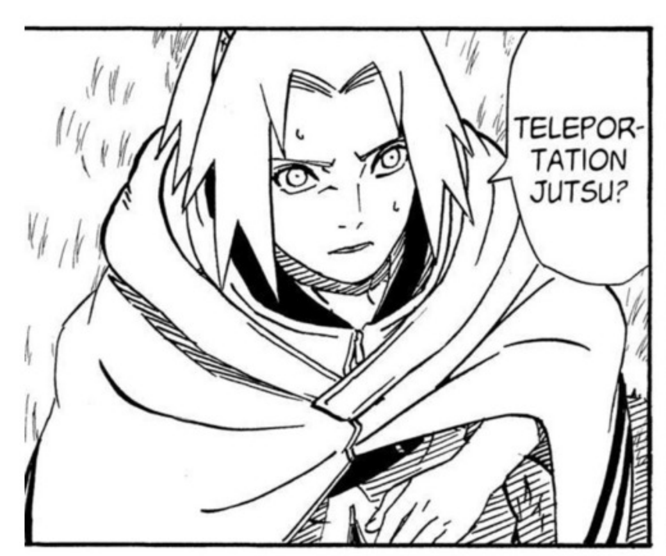

SK
TIK


WHAT THE?!





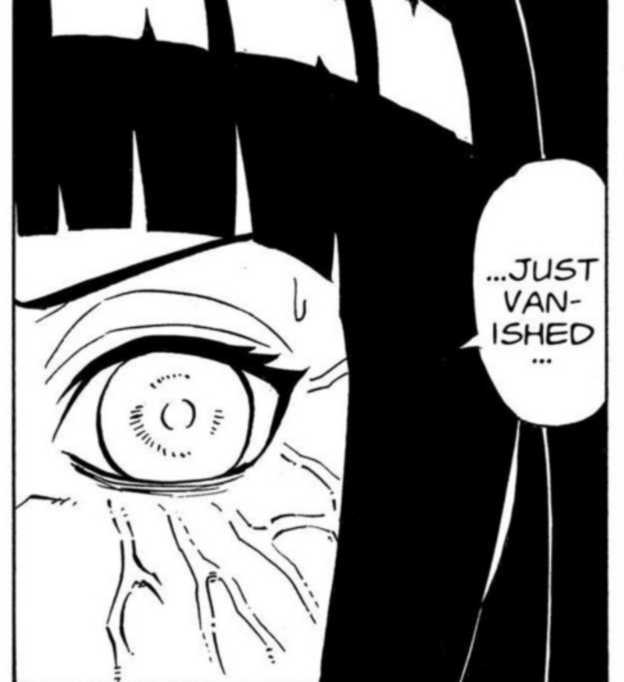

TELEPORTATION JUTSU?

BUT THAT'S IMPOSSIBLE...!
THE BEETLES SUDDENLY LOST TRACK OF HIM AND HIS CHAKRA!

NO... THERE'S NO WAY...
SO HE USED SOME OTHER FORM OF TELEPORTATION NINJUTSU...?

NO... IT'S NOT THE ART OF TELEPORTATION.
IF IT WERE, THE BEETLES WOULD HAVE REACTED TO THE REAPPEARANCE OF HIS CHAKRA AND HEADED TOWARDS HIS NEW POSITION.
THEY WOULDN'T LOSE HIM ENTIRELY.

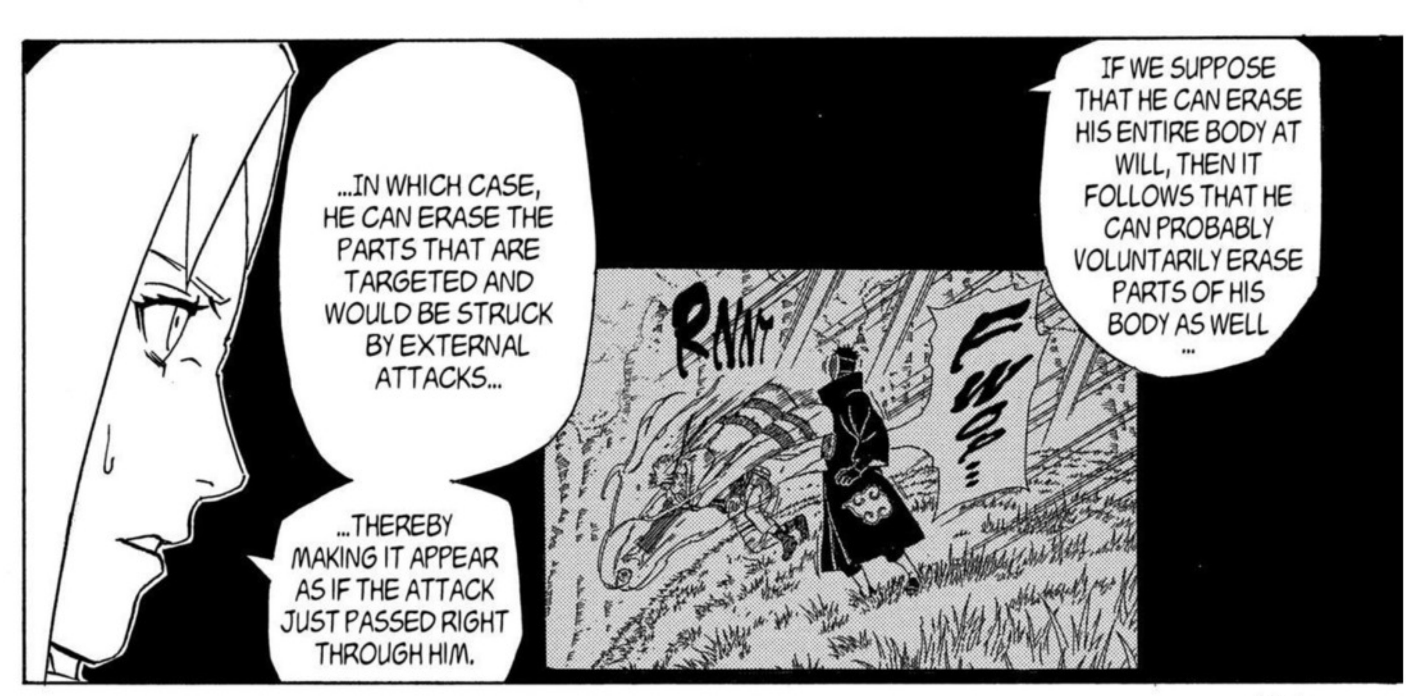

...BUT... HE SUD-DENLY...


...JUST VAN-ISHED...


HE TRAVELED THROUGH SPACE WITHOUT WEAVING SIGNS, SUM-MONING OR USING MARKS?
THAT'S NINJUTSU THAT SUR-PASSES THE FOURTH HOKAGE'S ABILITIES.


HE ERASED HIS WHOLE BODY...
...HE CAN ERASE HIS ENTIRE PRES-ENCE?


NO WAY...
BUT...!


IF WE SUPPOSE THAT HE CAN ERASE HIS ENTIRE BODY AT WILL, THEN IT FOLLOWS THAT HE CAN PROBABLY VOLUNTARILY ERASE PARTS OF HIS BODY AS WELL...
...IN WHICH CASE, HE CAN ERASE THE PARTS THAT ARE TARGETED AND WOULD BE STRUCK BY EXTERNAL ATTACKS...
...THEREBY MAKING IT APPEAR AS IF THE ATTACK JUST PASSED RIGHT THROUGH HIM.
RNNT
FWOO...

READ THIS WAY



















SWISH

KRAK

TUNNELING FANG!!

!

SH

READ THIS WAY







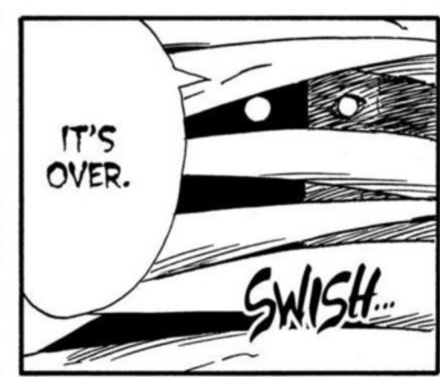






ZWOOO...



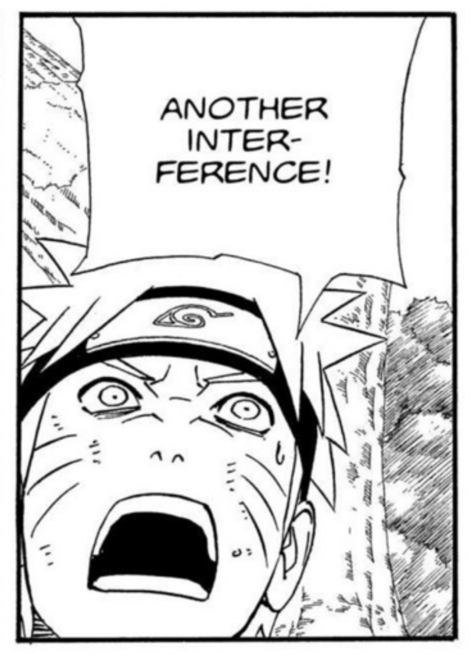


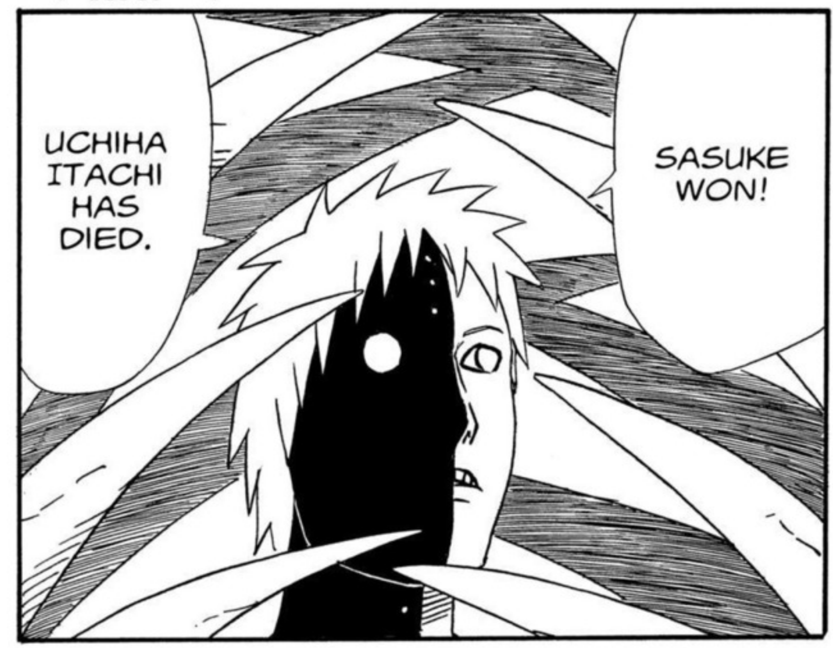


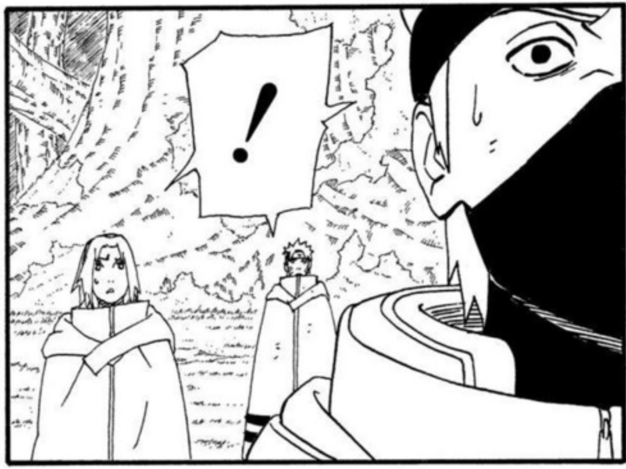
HIM. HE WAS ON THAT AKATSUKI ROSTER KABUTO LEFT US...

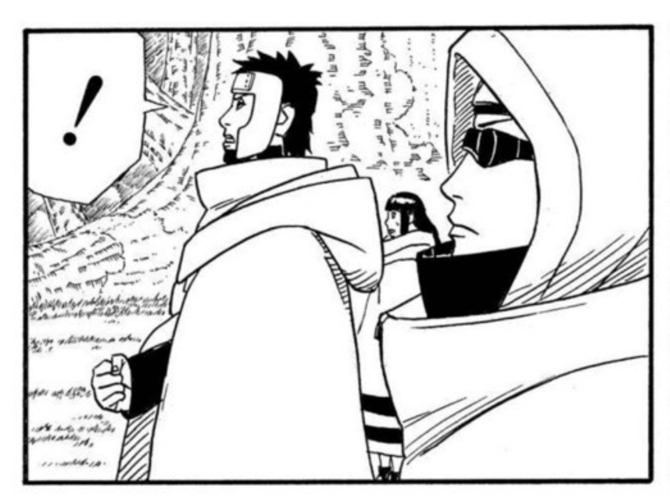
TKAT...

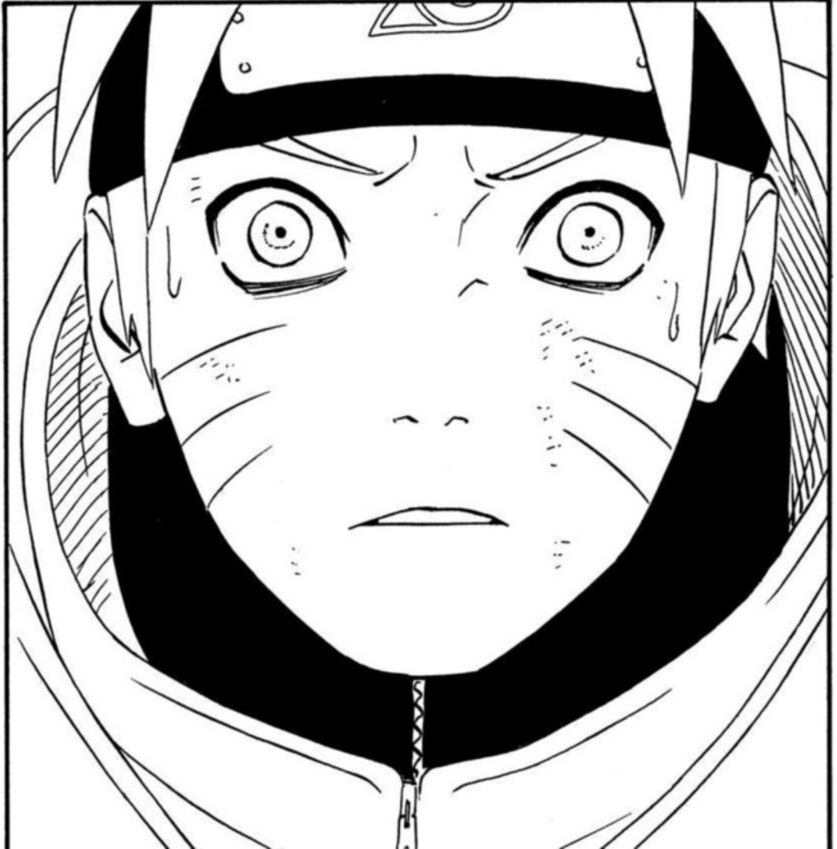

READ
THIS
WAY


ANOTHER INTER-FERENCE!


SASUKE WON!
UCHIHA ITACHI HAS DIED.

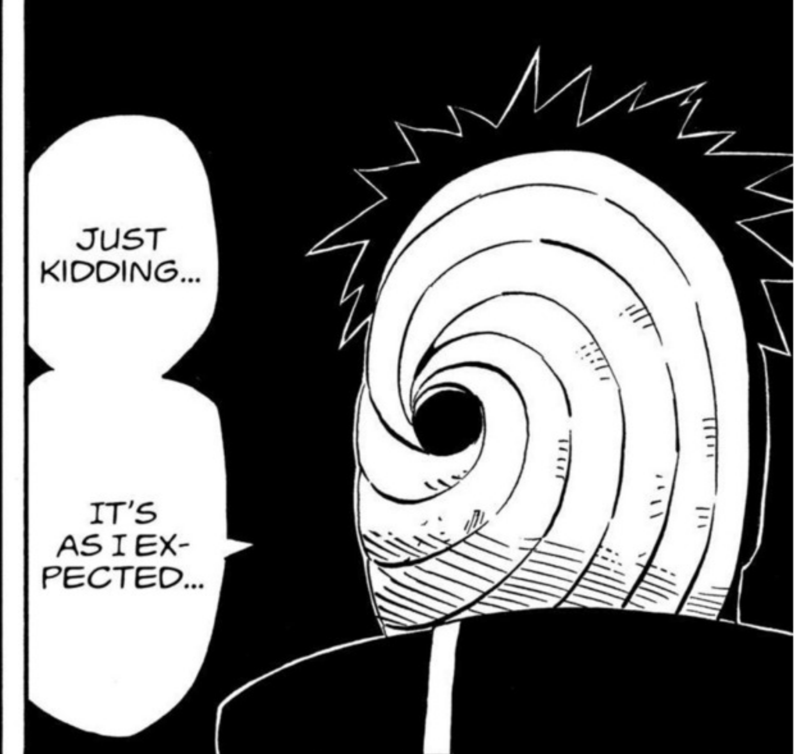

!


!



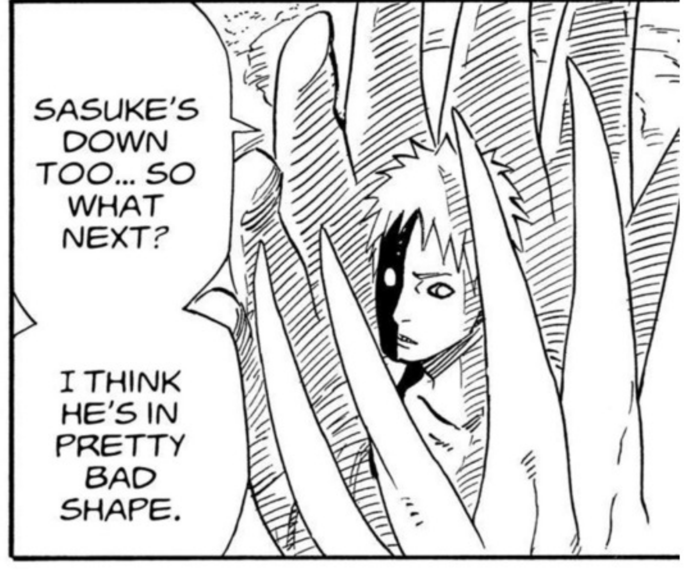

WHOA! NO WAY!

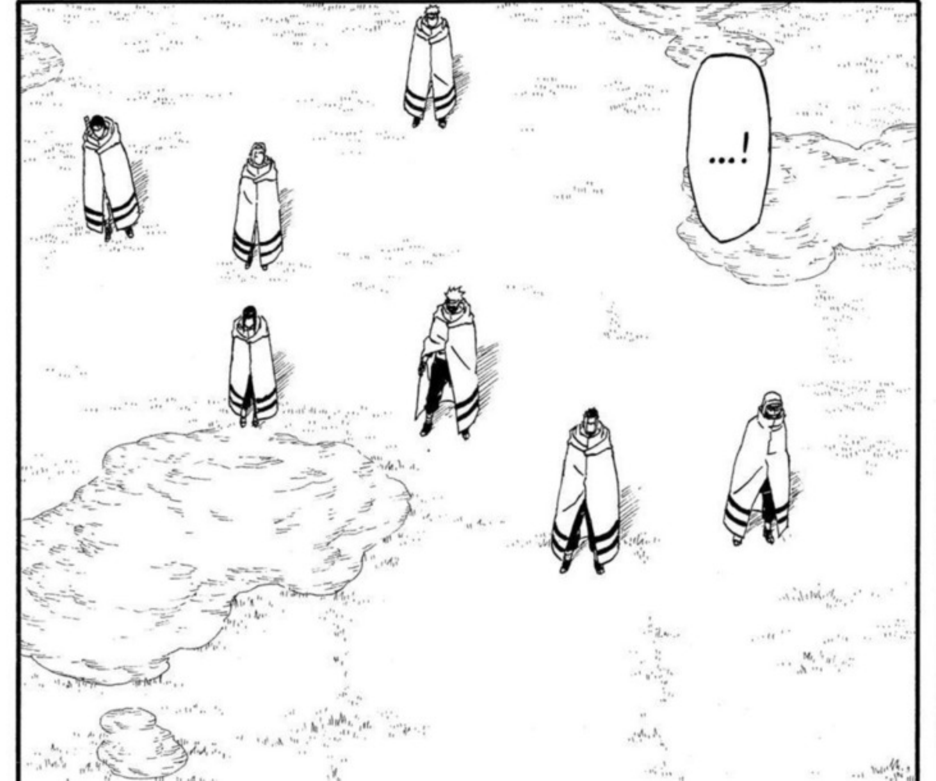

S-SASUKE... KILLED ITACHI...?


JUST KIDDING...
IT'S AS I EX-PECTED...


...!


!!


SASUKE'S DOWN TOO... SO WHAT NEXT?
I THINK HE'S IN PRETTY BAD SHAPE.


...!

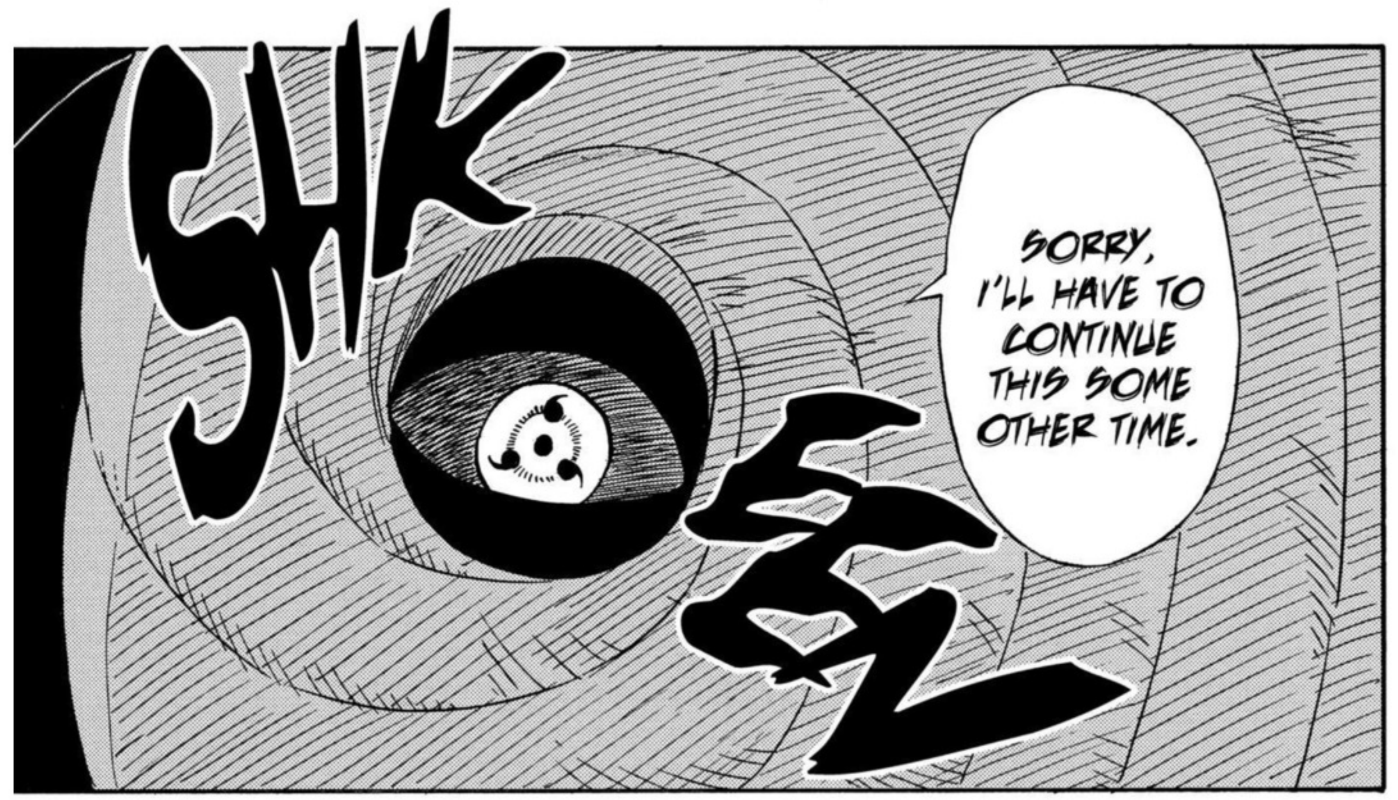

!!


DUNF
HEY!! YOU THERE, SPIKY ALOE GUY!!
WHERE IS SASUKE?!


ALOE?!
IGNORE HIM...


!

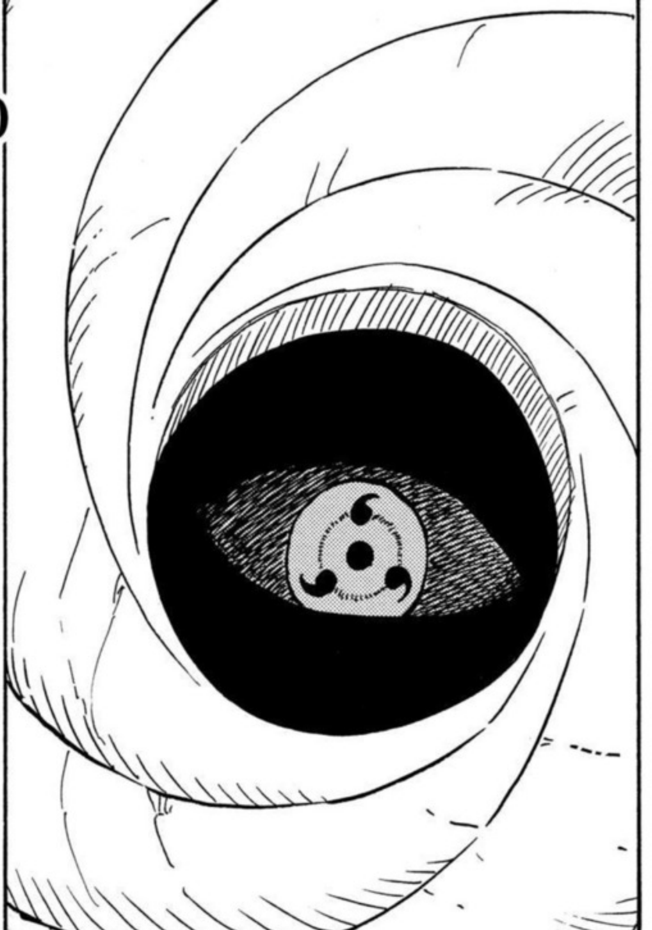



SORRY, I'LL HAVE TO CONTINUE THIS SOME OTHER TIME.



Number 396: Self-Intro















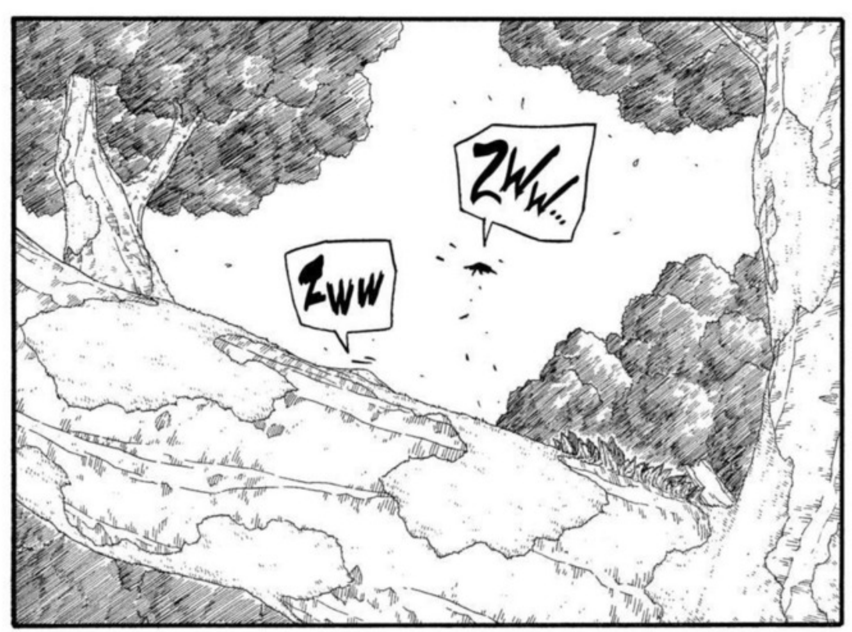



?

WHO... IN THE WORLD IS HE?!

ZWOOO...

SWSH
LATER.

ZWOOO
FLUFT...

ZWW...
ZWW



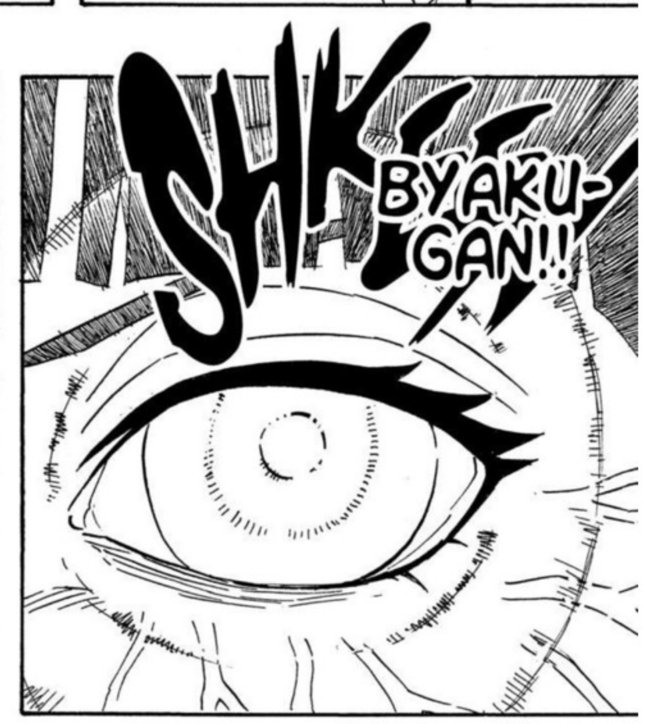


TMP




HINATA! PLEASE TAKE A LOOK TOWARD 4 O'CLOCK!


Y-YES, SIR!

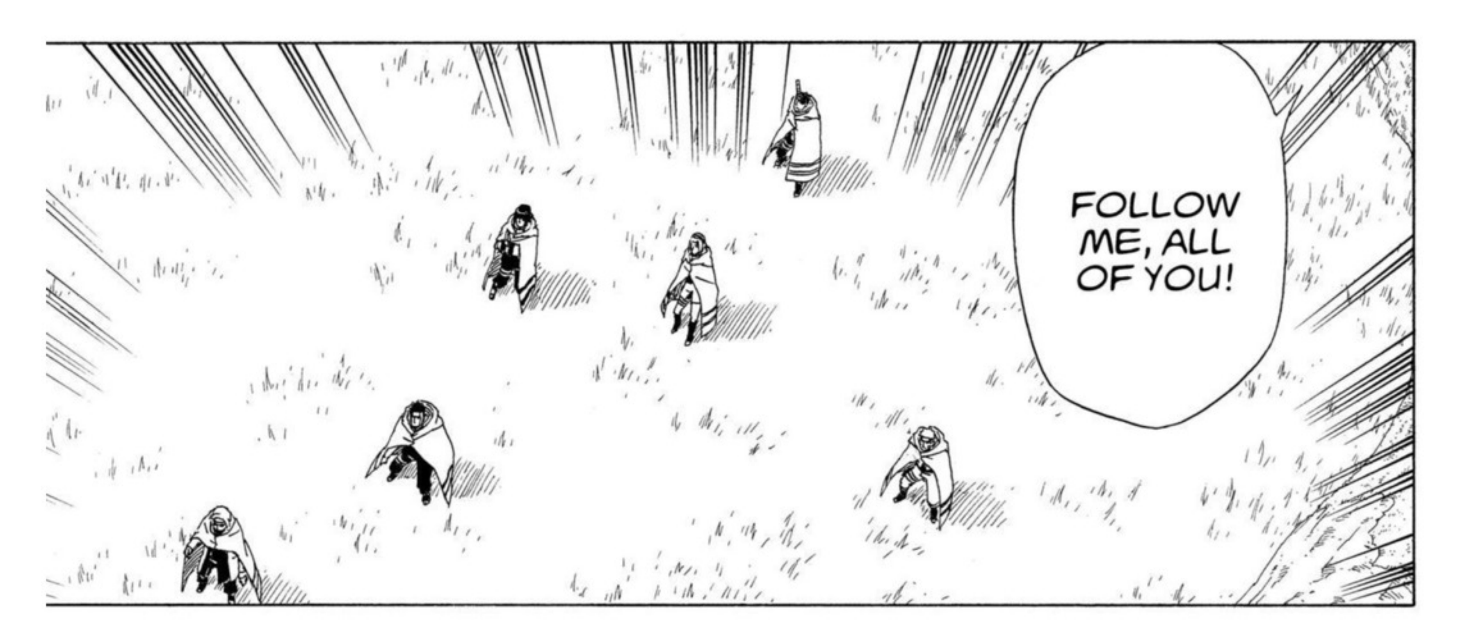

SHK
BYAKU-GAN!!


FABOOSH


READ THIS WAY


ABOUT TEN KILOMETERS AHEAD, I SEE A POWERFUL CHAKRA SPREAD OUT ACROSS A WIDE SWATH...
AND... FOR SOME REASON... THE FOREST IS ON FIRE... WITH BLACK FLAMES.


THE AMA-TERASU ?!
THAT'S IT!


FOLLOW ME, ALL OF YOU!


...THIS TIME...!

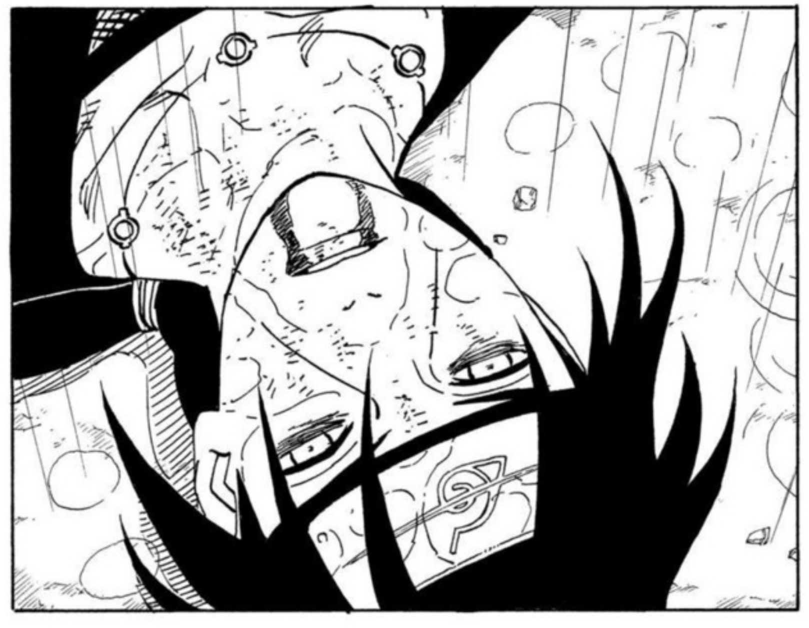

FULL SPEED AHEAD!!





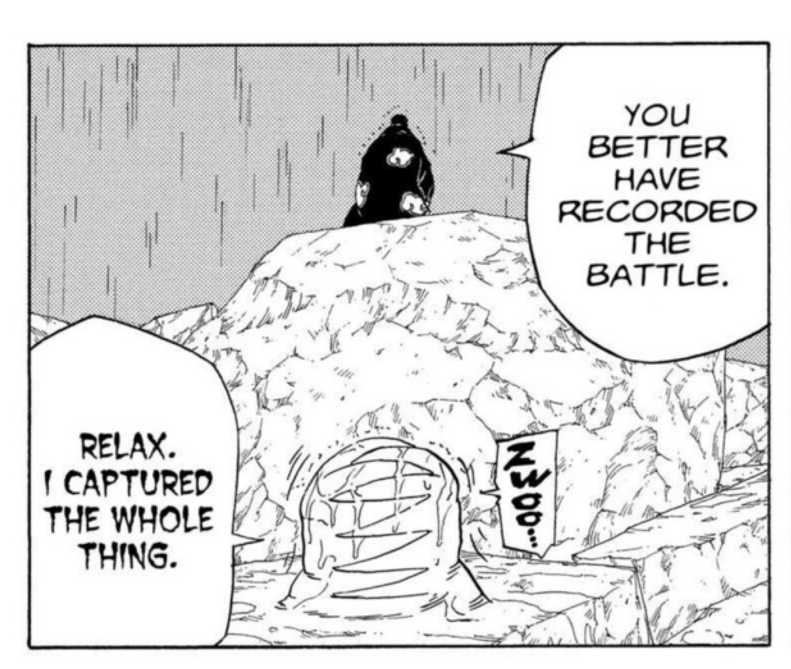
Number 396: Self-Intro


READ
THIS
WAY




YOU'RE LATE.


I'M NOT YOU.
I CAN'T SHIFT AS FAST AS YOU.
ZWOO...

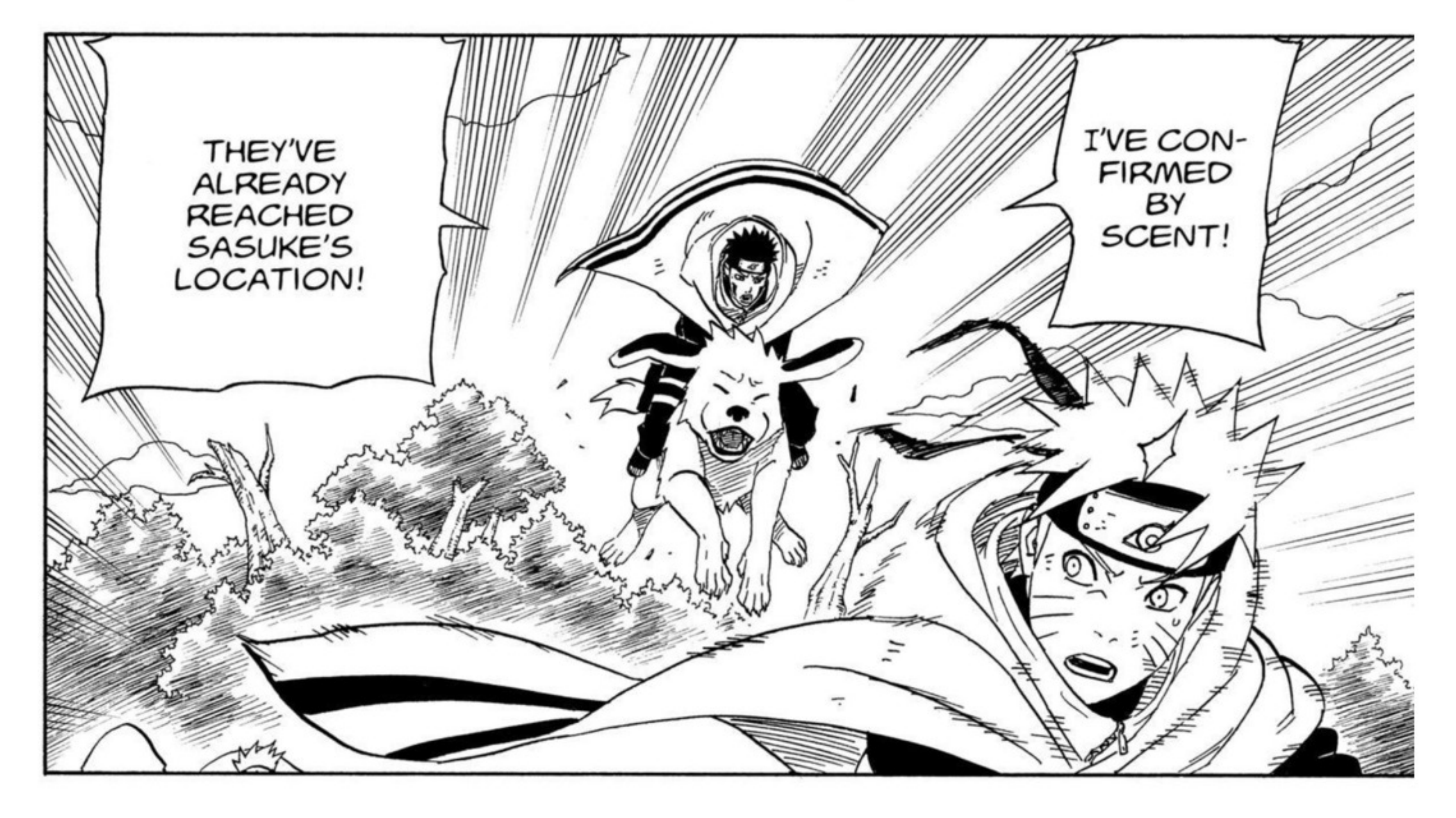

YOU BETTER HAVE RECORDED THE BATTLE.
ZWOO...
RELAX. I CAPTURED THE WHOLE THING.


LATER ON, I'D LIKE TO CLOSELY REVIEW IT.


WE'RE TAKING ITACHI'S CORPSE, TOO.
WE SHOULD GO NOW.


SHOOM SHOOM SHOOM


!
SNIFF


I'VE CON-FIRMED BY SCENT!
THEY'VE ALREADY REACHED SASUKE'S LOCATION!


DARN IT!!


!

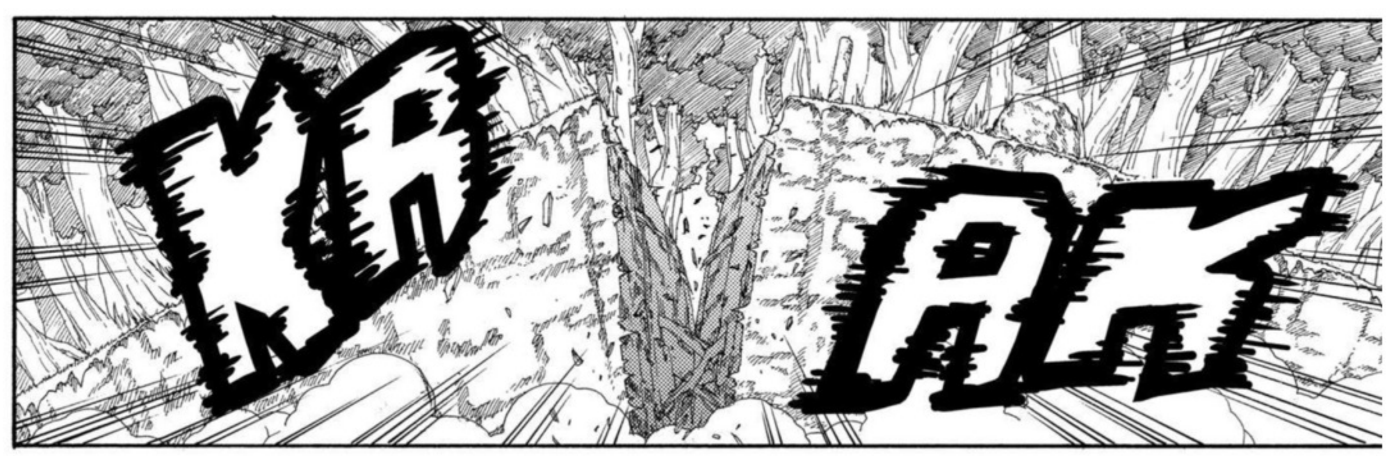

FABOOSH
SO THIS IS THE AMATERASU, HUH... MY FIRST LOOK.

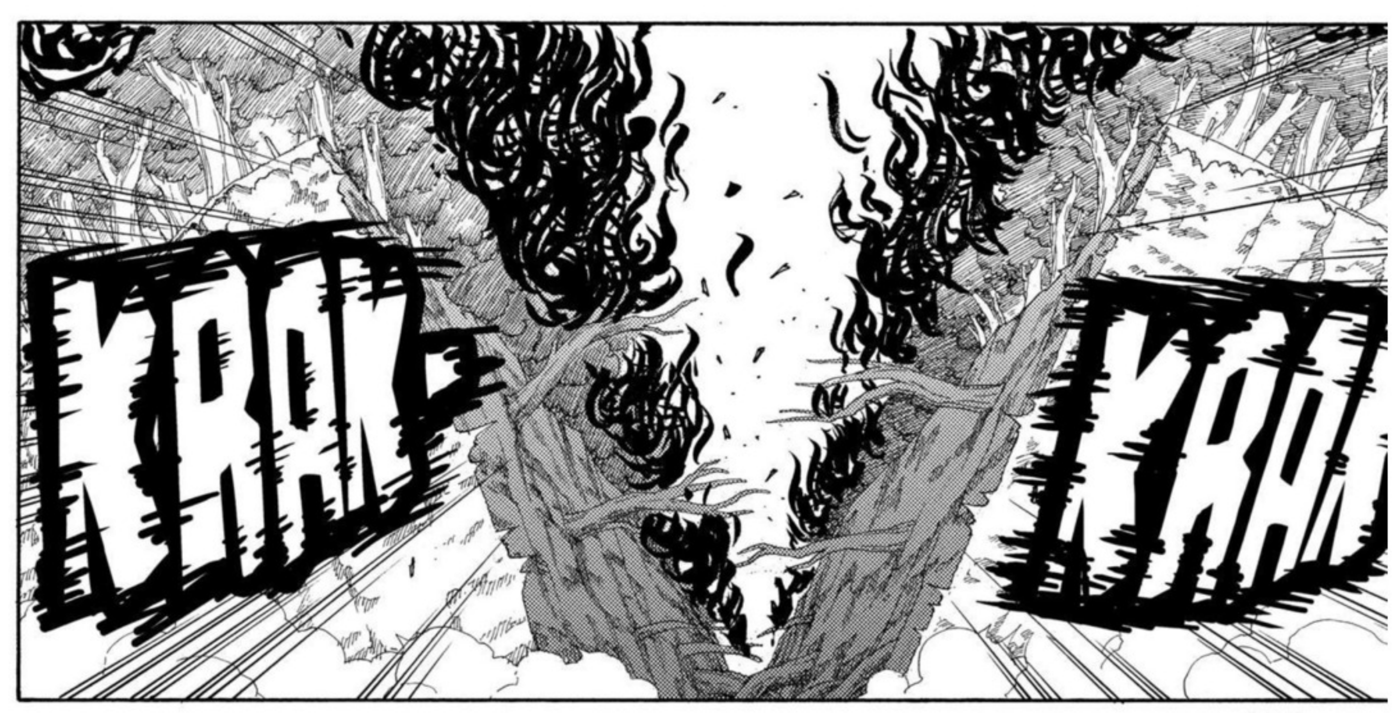

WHAT IS THAT?


IT'S ONE OF ITACHI'S JUTSU...!!

YAMATO!
YES, SIR!
SHOOM...
EARTH STYLE!
PLANET SPLITTER!!
FWP
TAK

FWOOM

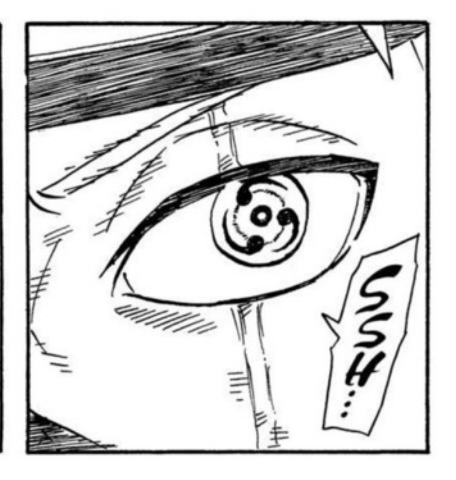





READ
THIS
WAY

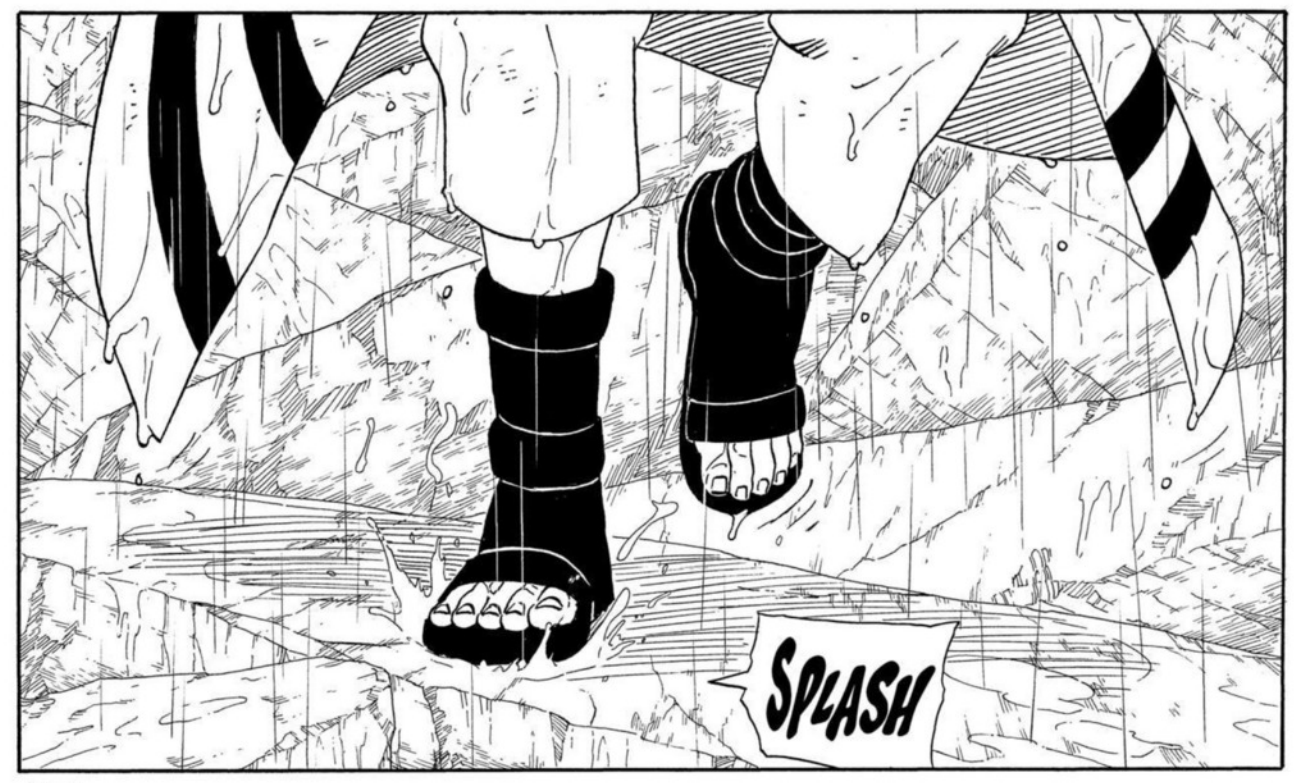

YOU CAN PROCEED NOW!

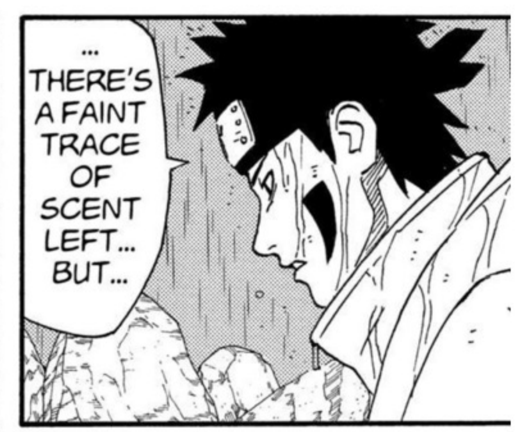

ALL RIGHT! ALL BUT YAMATO, FOLLOW ME!


SSH...


SHK
EEN

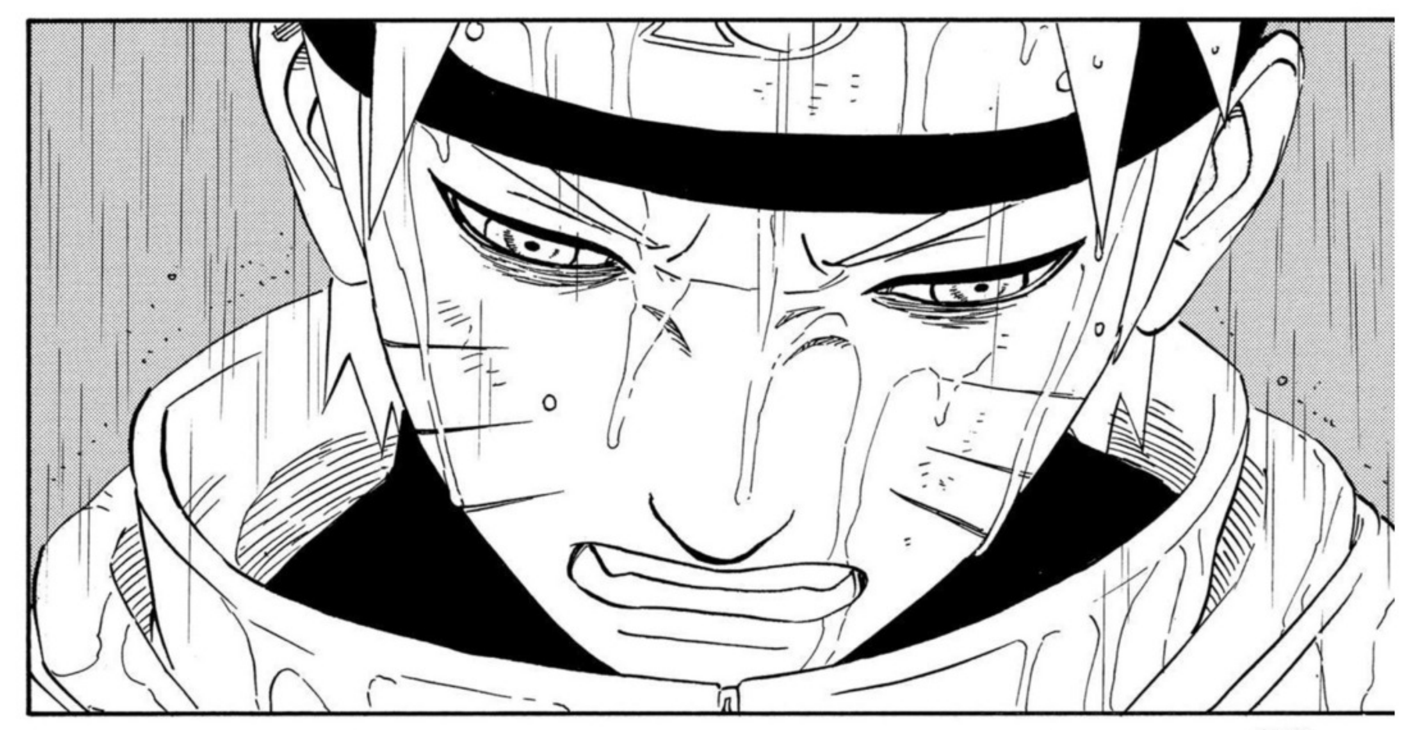

WHOOOSH


SPLASH

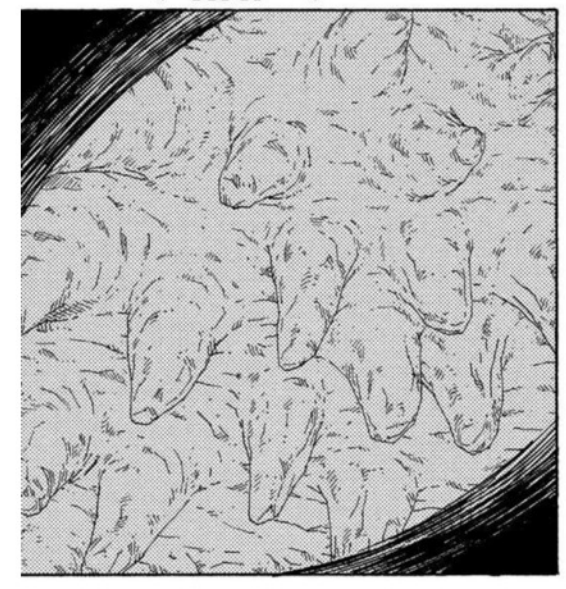

...THERE'S A FAINT TRACE OF SCENT LEFT... BUT...

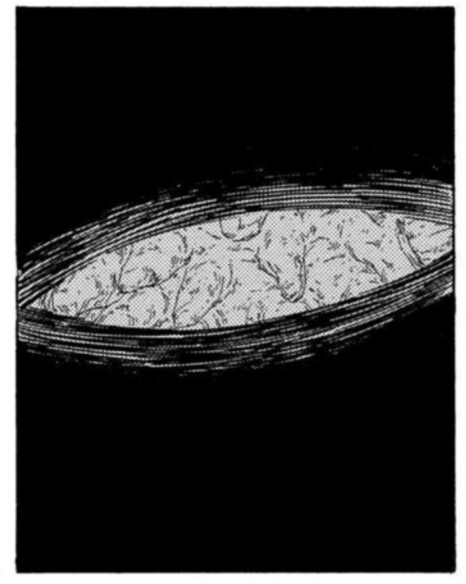

WE'RE TOO LATE, HUH...


NARUTO ...

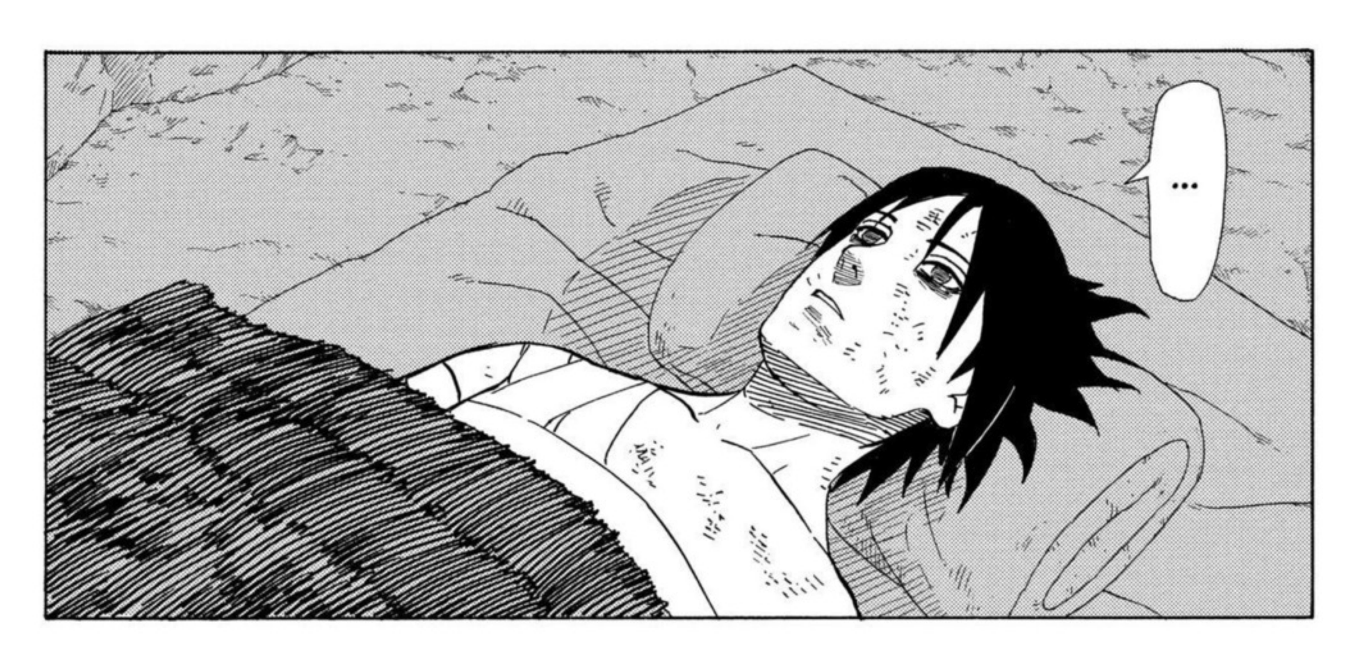



READ
THIS
WAY

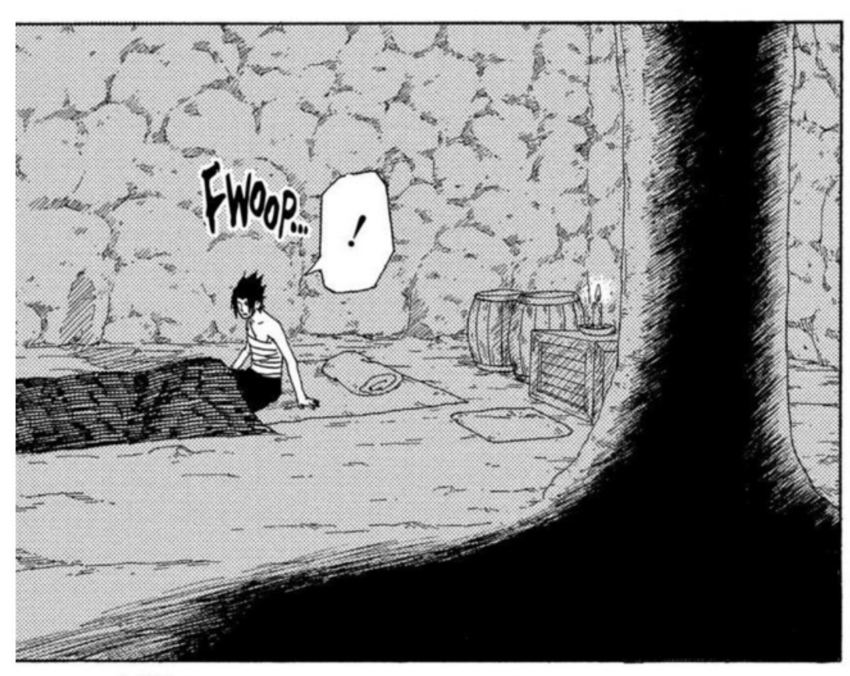






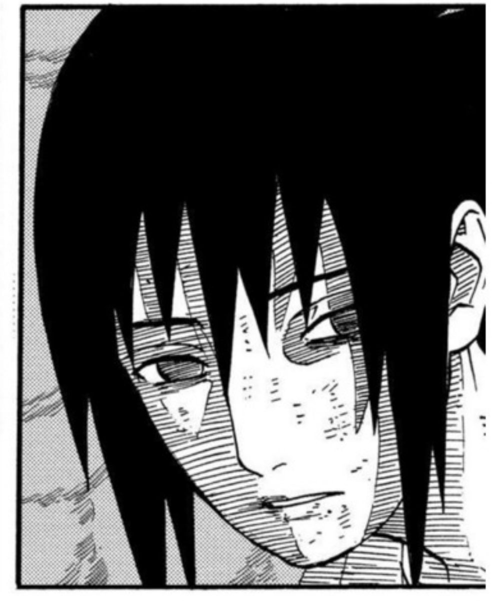

...


I TREATED YOUR WOUNDS.


!
FWOOP...

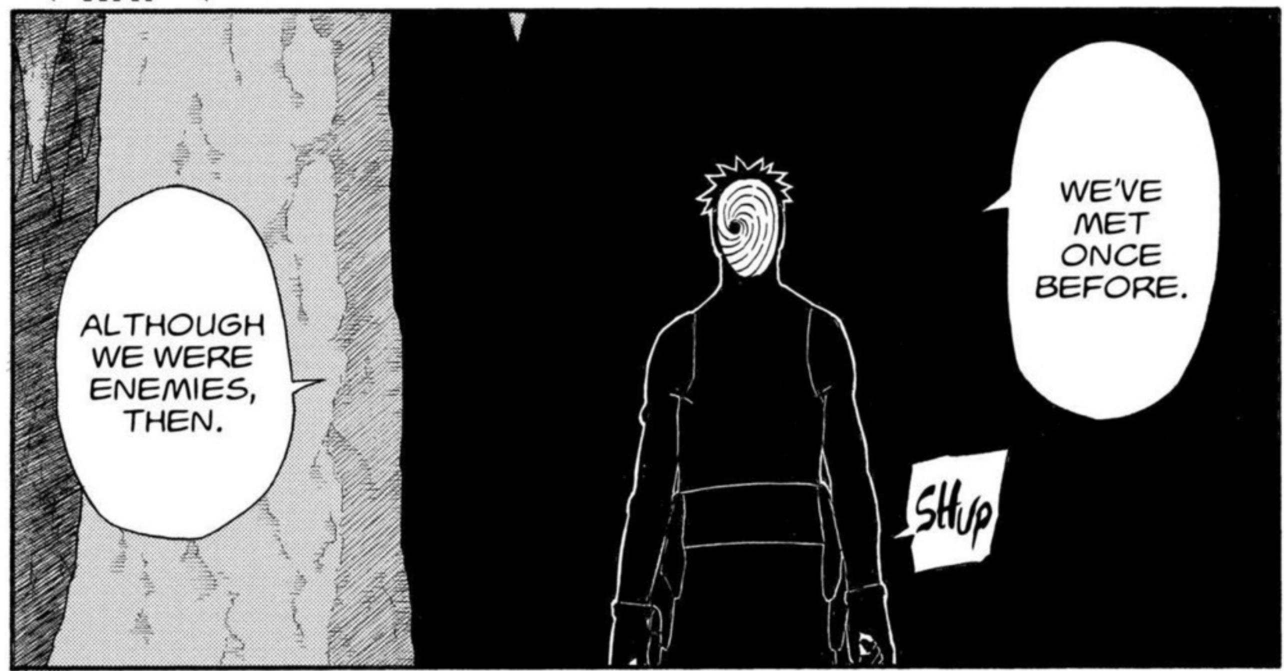

YOU WON.

...




BUT YOU'VE SUFFERED QUITE A BIT OF DAMAGE YOURSELF, WHICH YOU'RE NOT COMPLETELY OVER.
SO I WOULDN'T MOVE MORE THAN ABSOLUTELY NECES-SARY.


READ THIS WAY

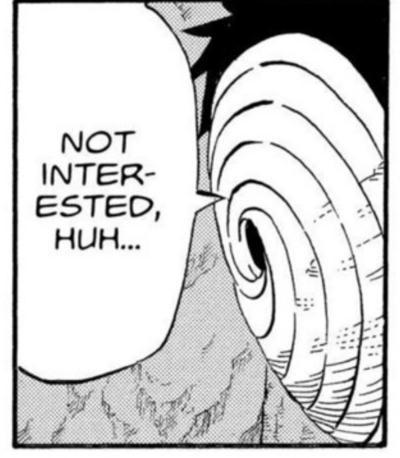

WE'VE MET ONCE BEFORE.
ALTHOUGH WE WERE ENEMIES, THEN.
SHUP

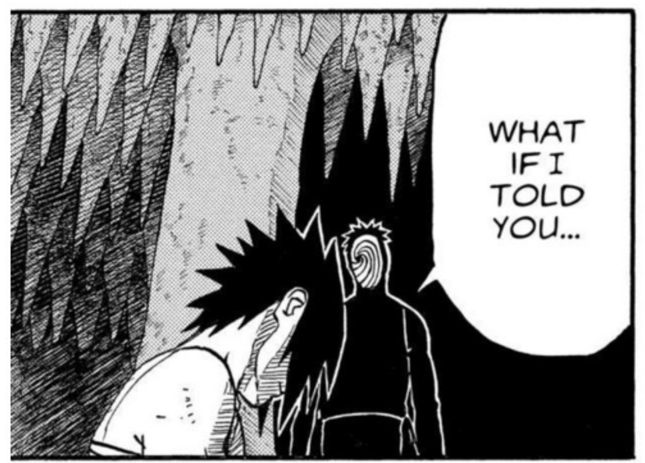

DON'T WORRY, I DON'T HOLD DEIDARA'S DEATH AGAINST YOU.
I AM NOT YOUR ENEMY.


...


I BROUGHT YOU HERE IN ORDER TO TELL YOU SOME-THING.




NOT INTER-ESTED, HUH...


WHAT IF I TOLD YOU...

...IT'S ABOUT UCHIHA ITACHI.





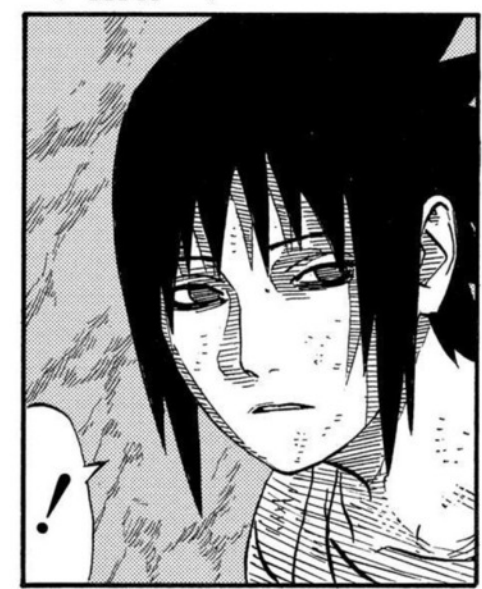


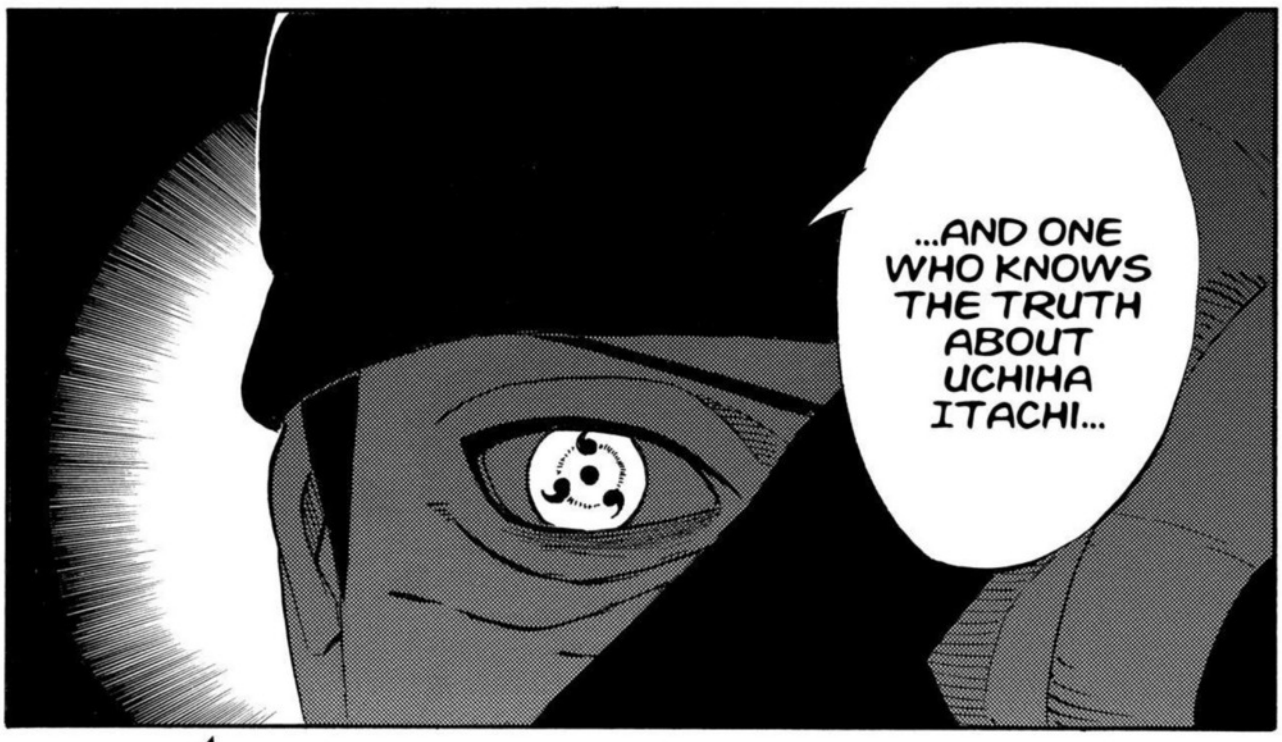





READ THIS WAY


I AM, LIKE YOU...
CHOK...
...AN UCHIHA SURVIVOR...


!

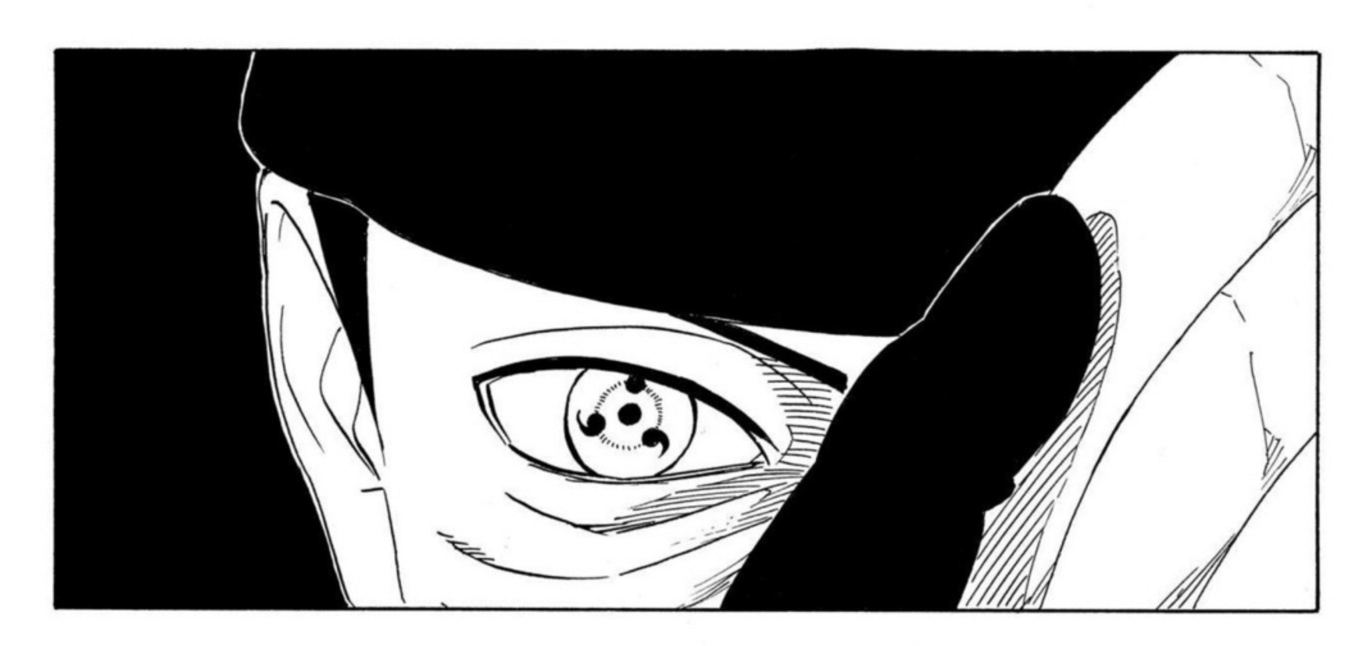

...AND ONE WHO KNOWS THE TRUTH ABOUT UCHIHA ITACHI...

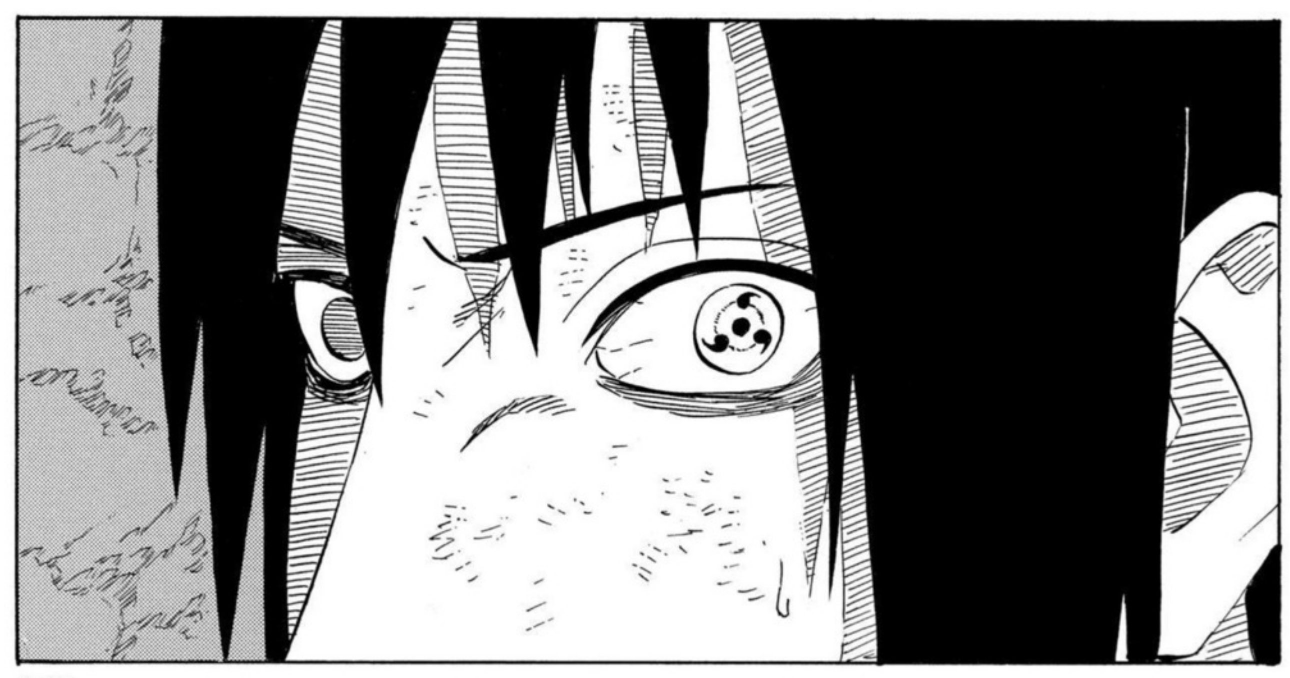

VEE
EEN



Number 397: The Man with the Truth

I KNOW THE TRUTH ABOUT UCHIHA ITACHI.

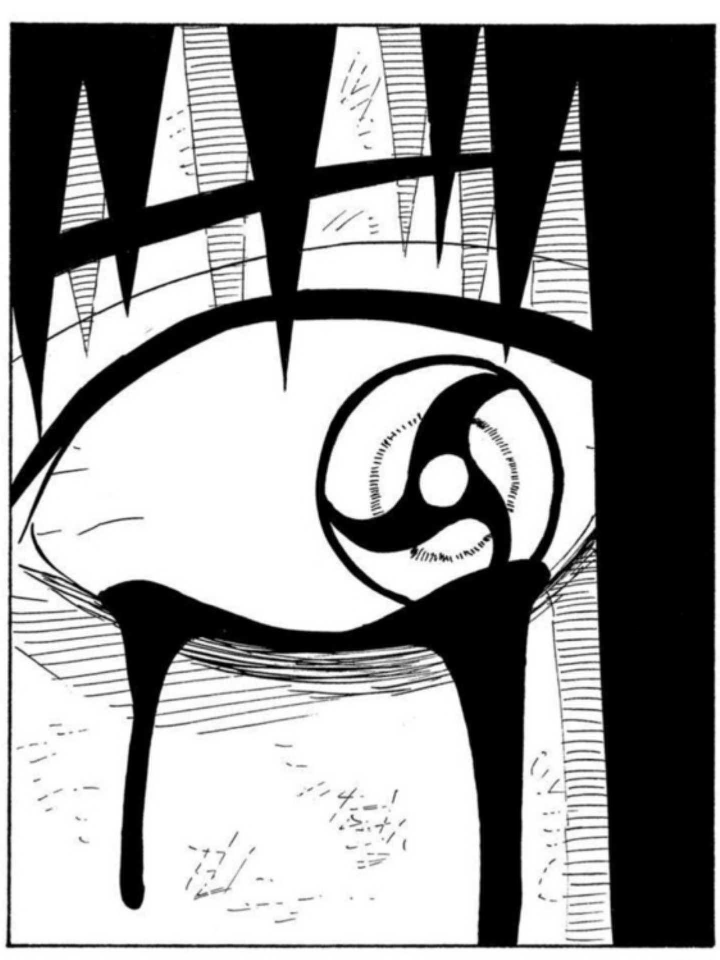





SQUILCH...


BWOIP...






!





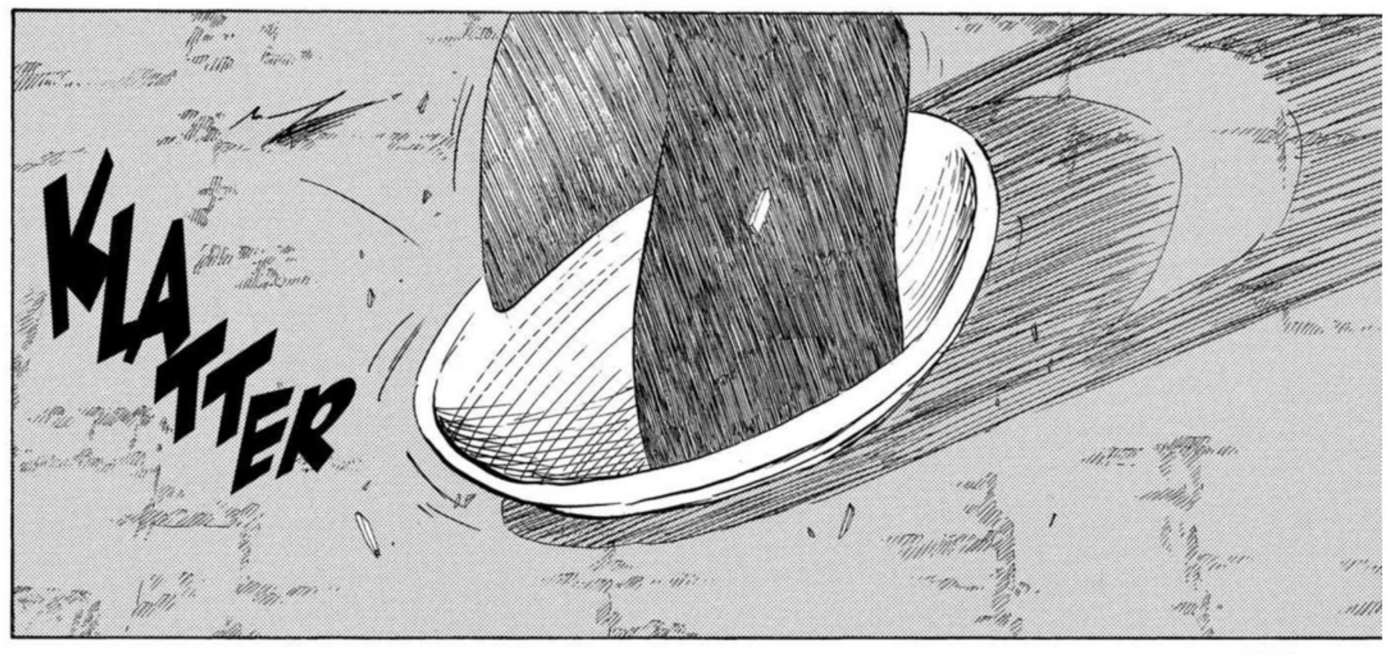


VWOOSH

FBOOSH

Number 397: The Man with the Truth

ARGH !!





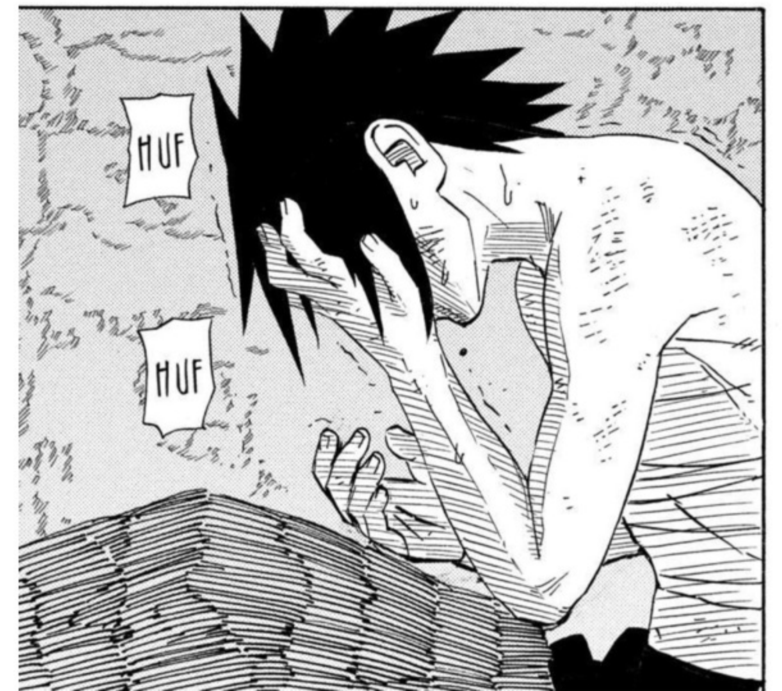
WHUMP

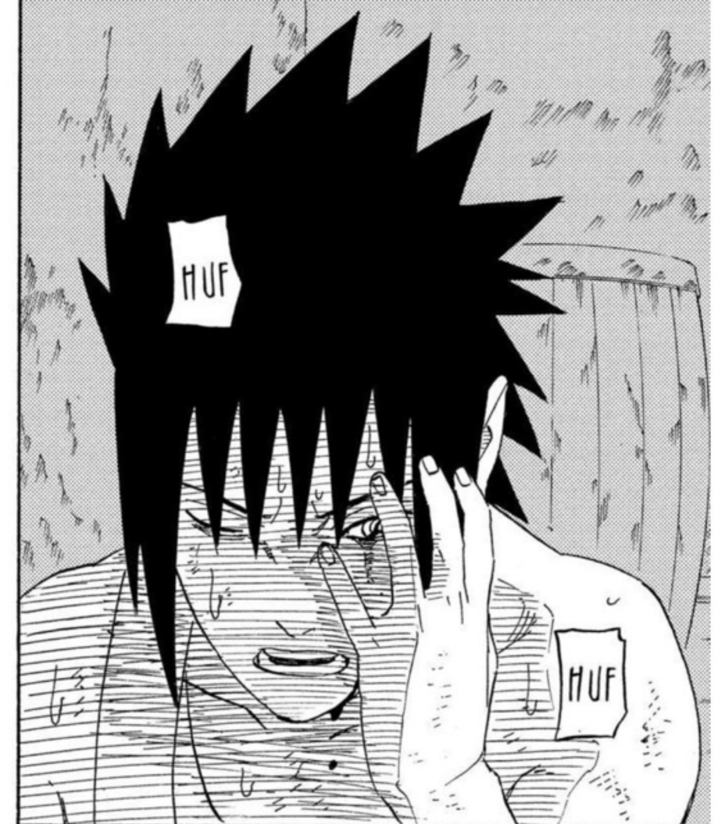
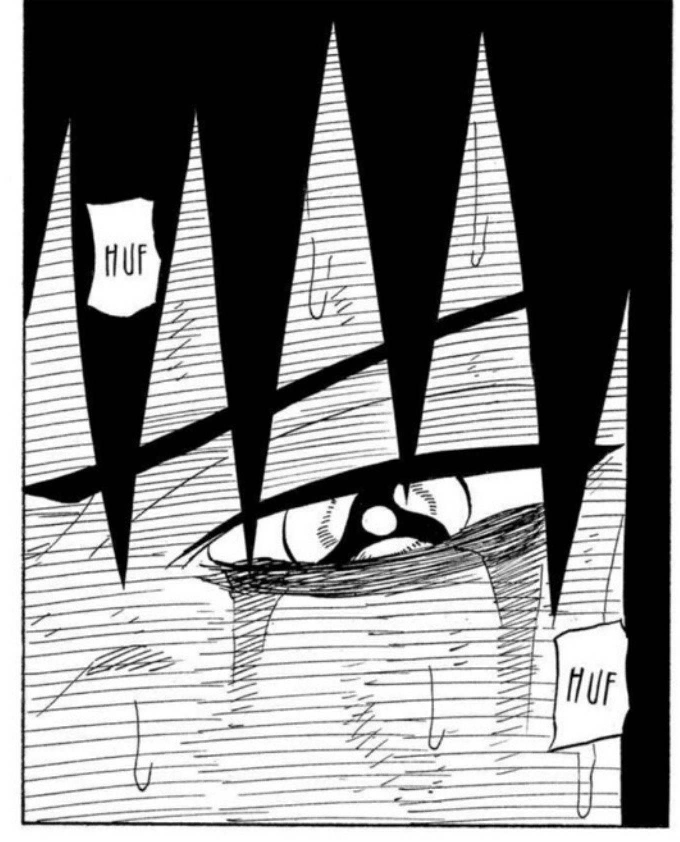
UGH!

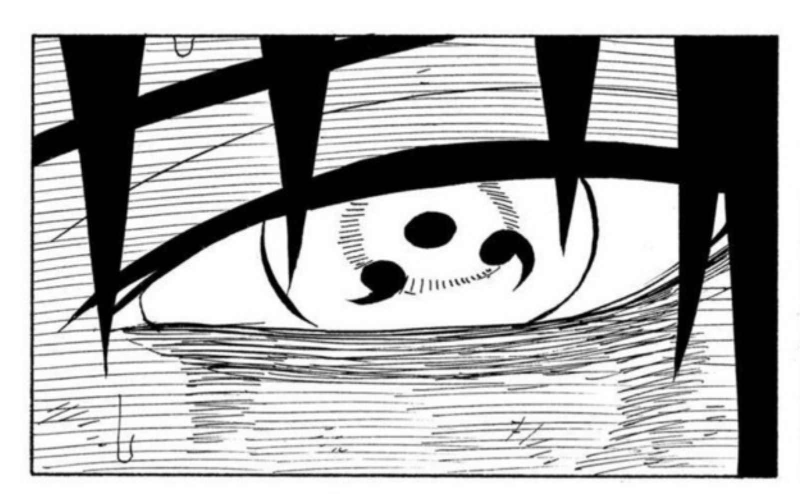
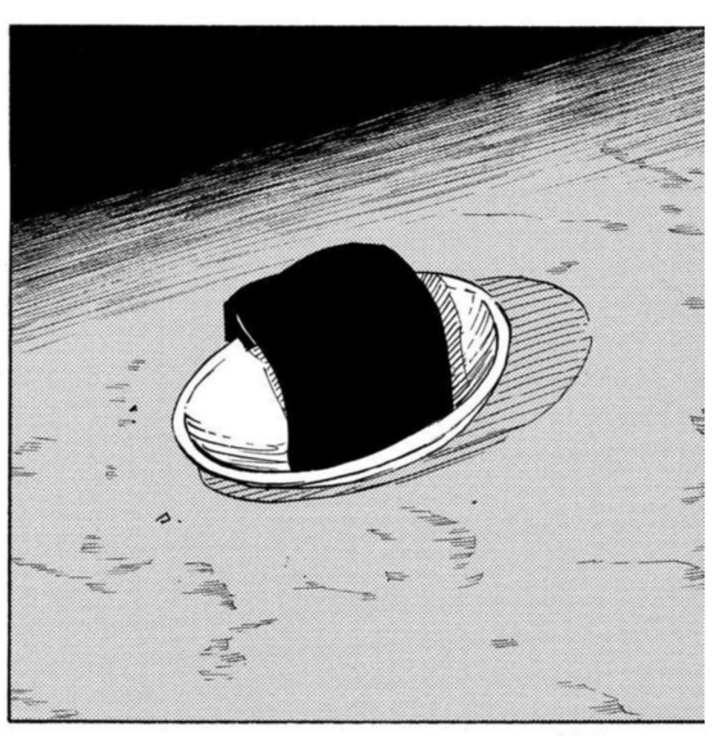
GAAAARGH!!

UNH...



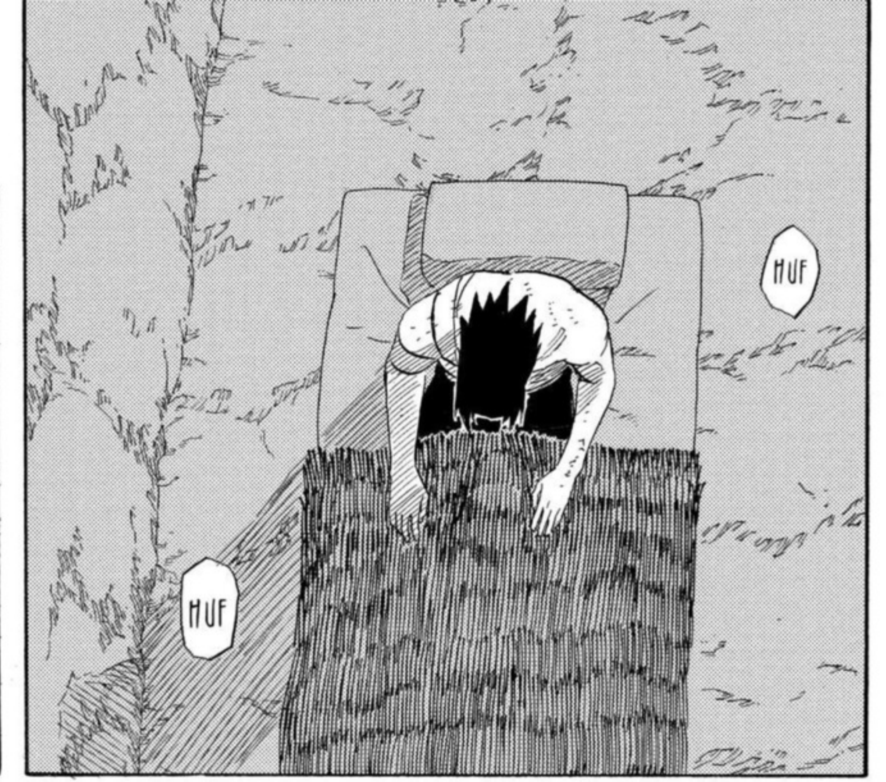



HUF
HUF

HUF
HUF

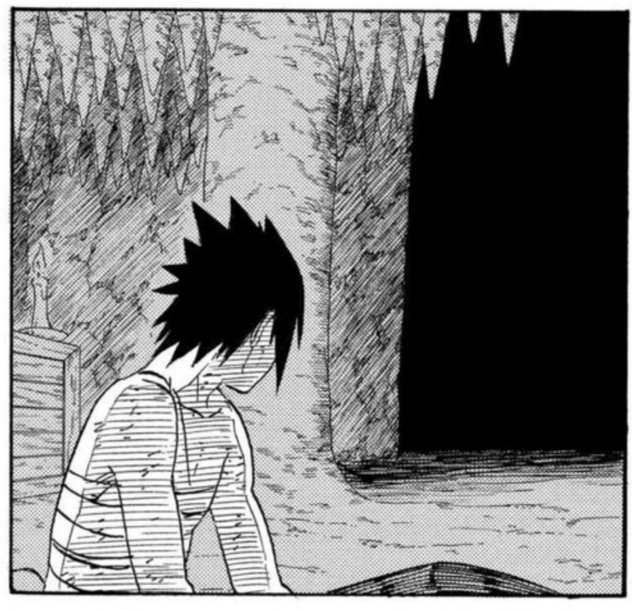
WSH...



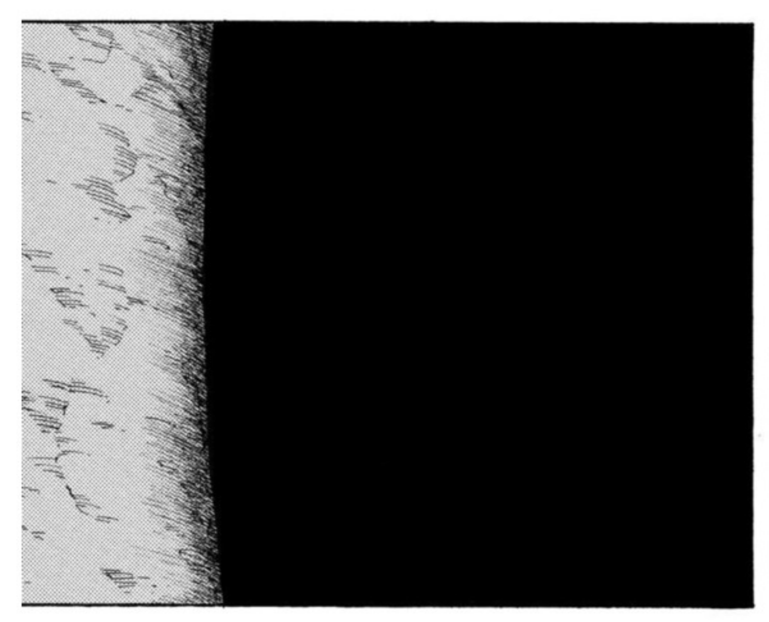
HUF
HUF

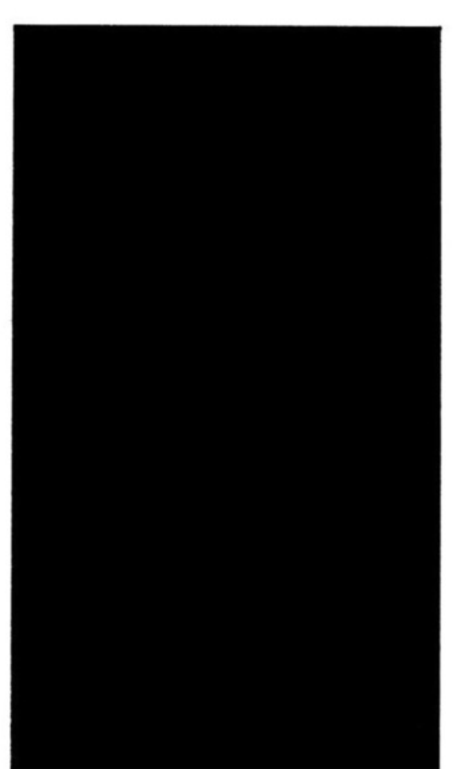

READ
THIS
WAY

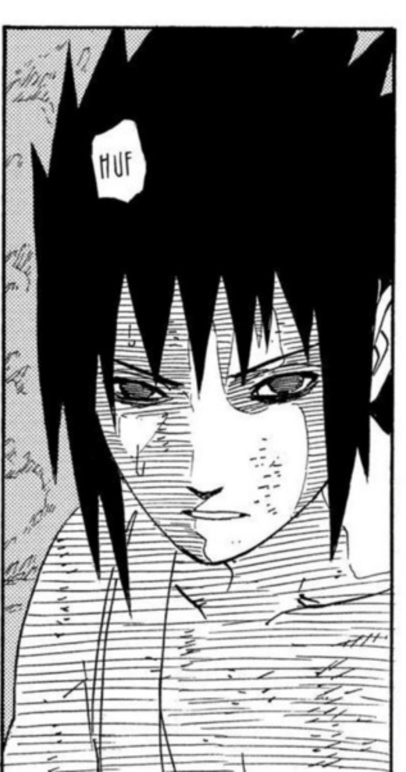

HUF
HUF

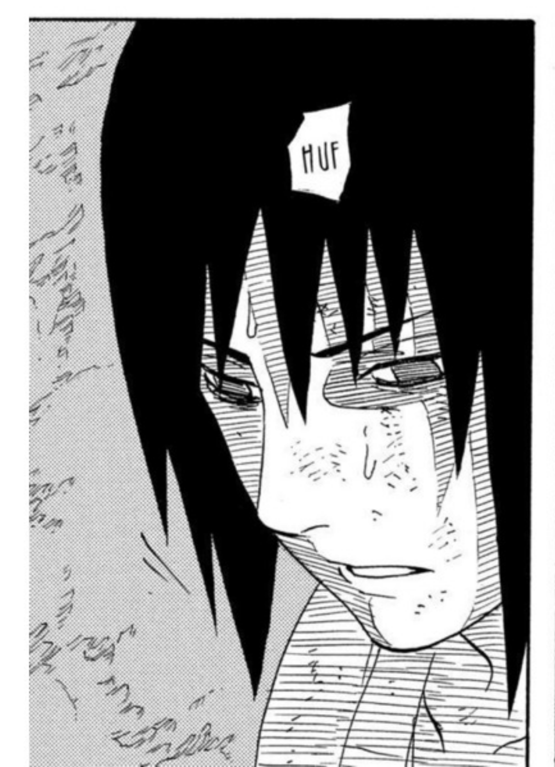

WHAT... **WAS** THAT?







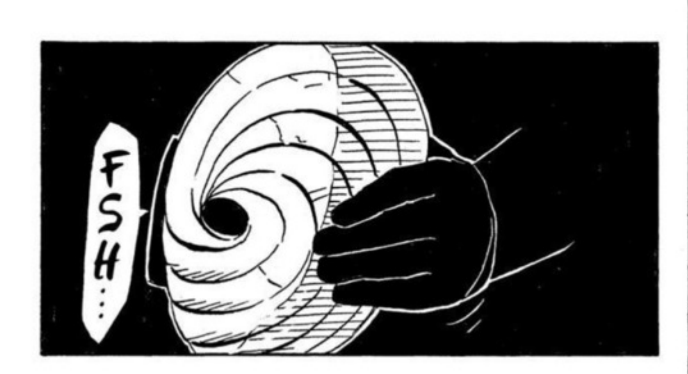

HUF

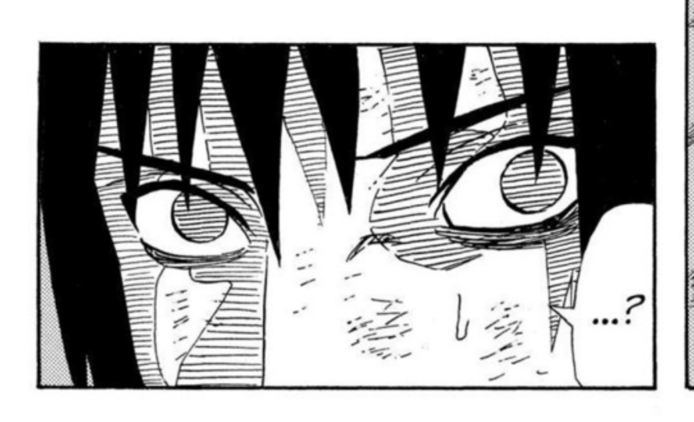

HUF

THE AMATERASU, WHICH ITACHI SEEMS TO HAVE IMPLANTED IN YOU.



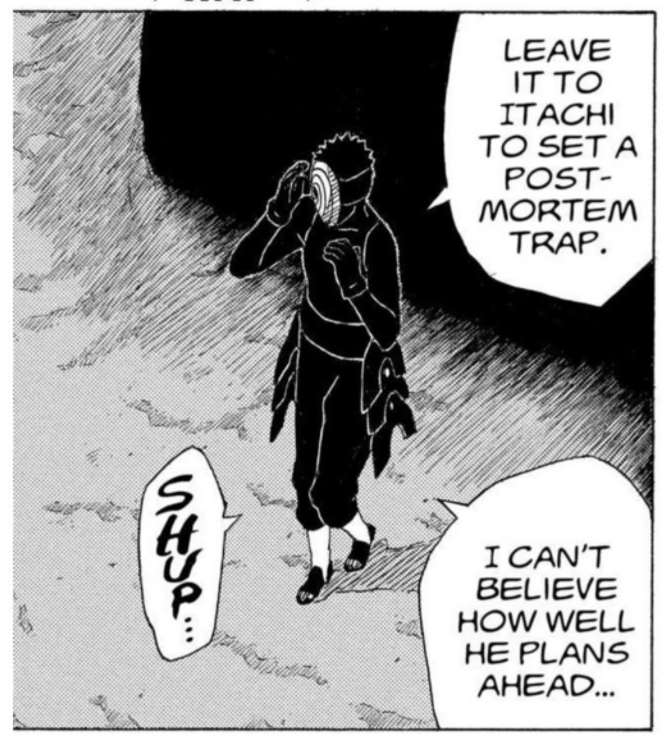


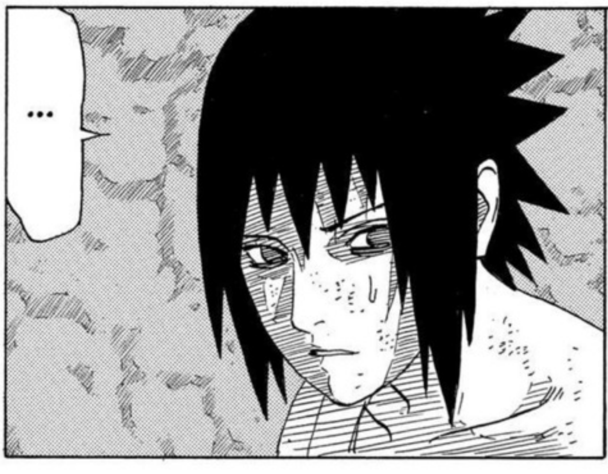





READ
THIS
WAY

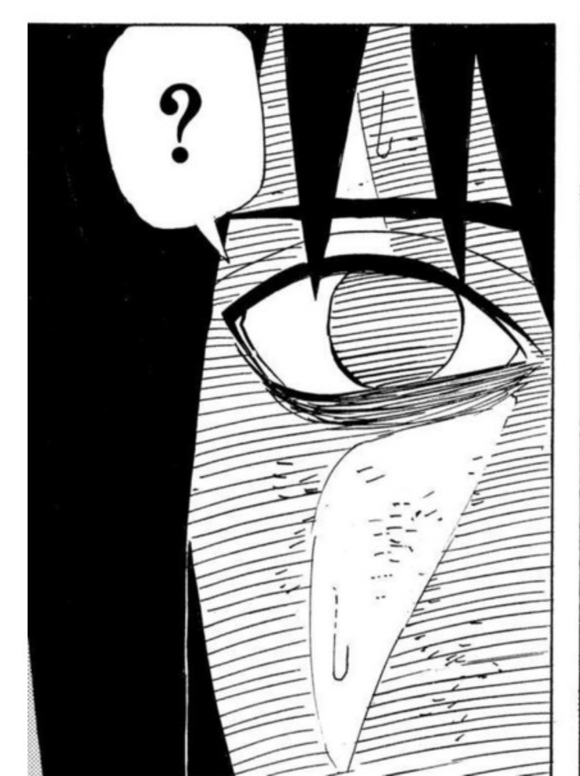

KRIK

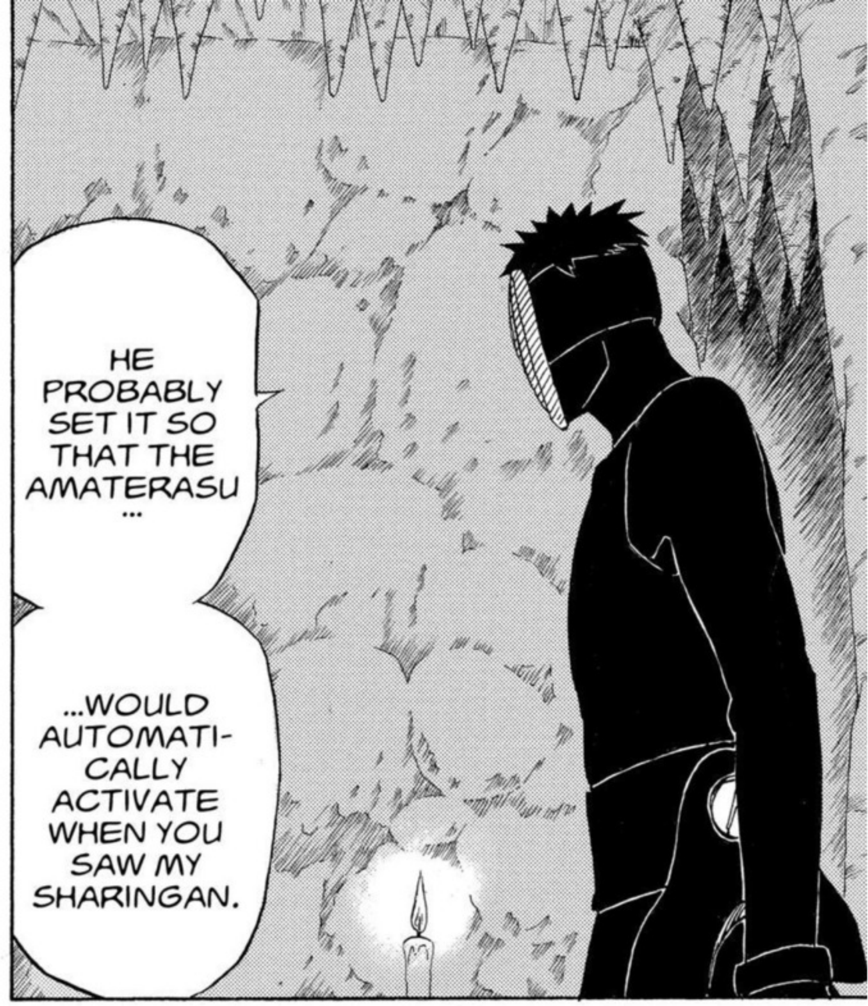

LEAVE IT TO ITACHI TO SET A POST-MORTEM TRAP.
I CAN'T BELIEVE HOW WELL HE PLANS AHEAD...
SHUP...

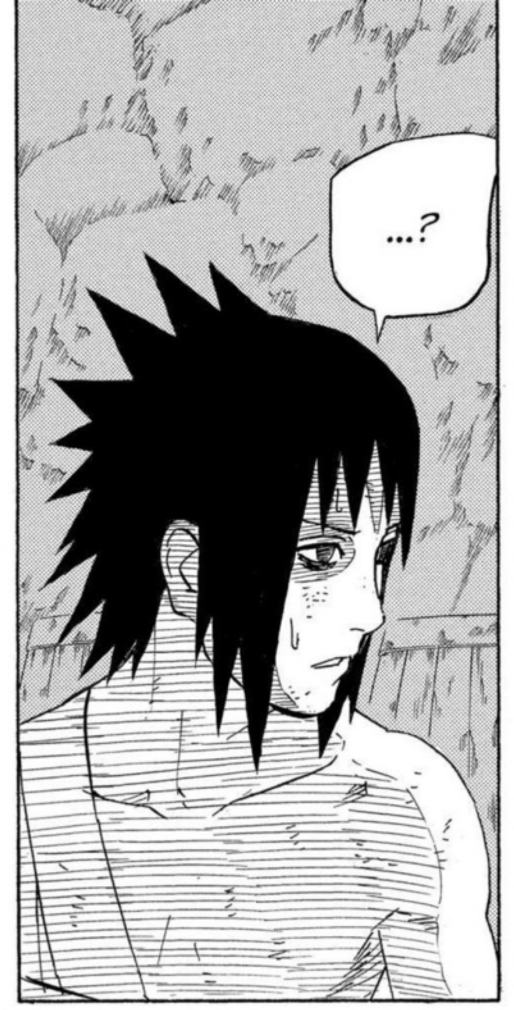

...


WHAT...
...ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?

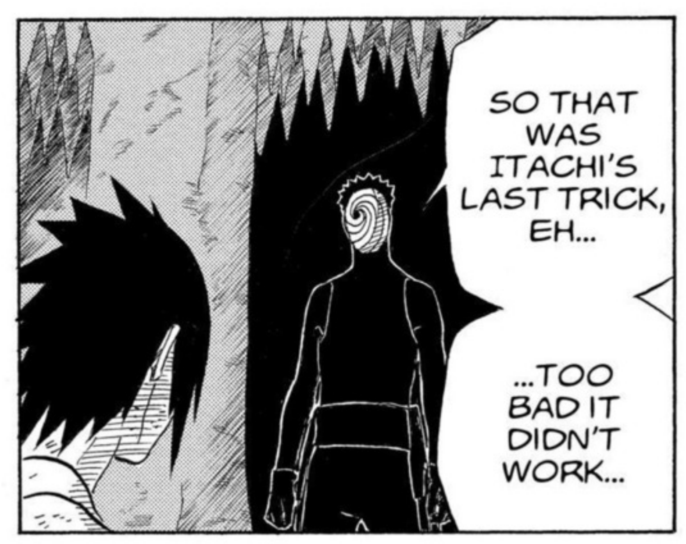

IN ORDER TO KILL ME, ITACHI PLACED A JUTSU IN YOU...
...OR AT LEAST TO KEEP ME AWAY FROM YOU...

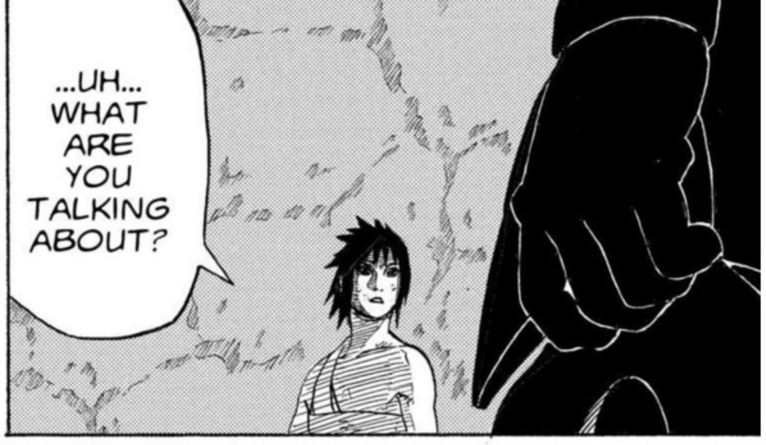

?


HE PROBABLY SET IT SO THAT THE AMATERASU ...
...WOULD AUTOMATI-CALLY ACTIVATE WHEN YOU SAW MY SHARINGAN.

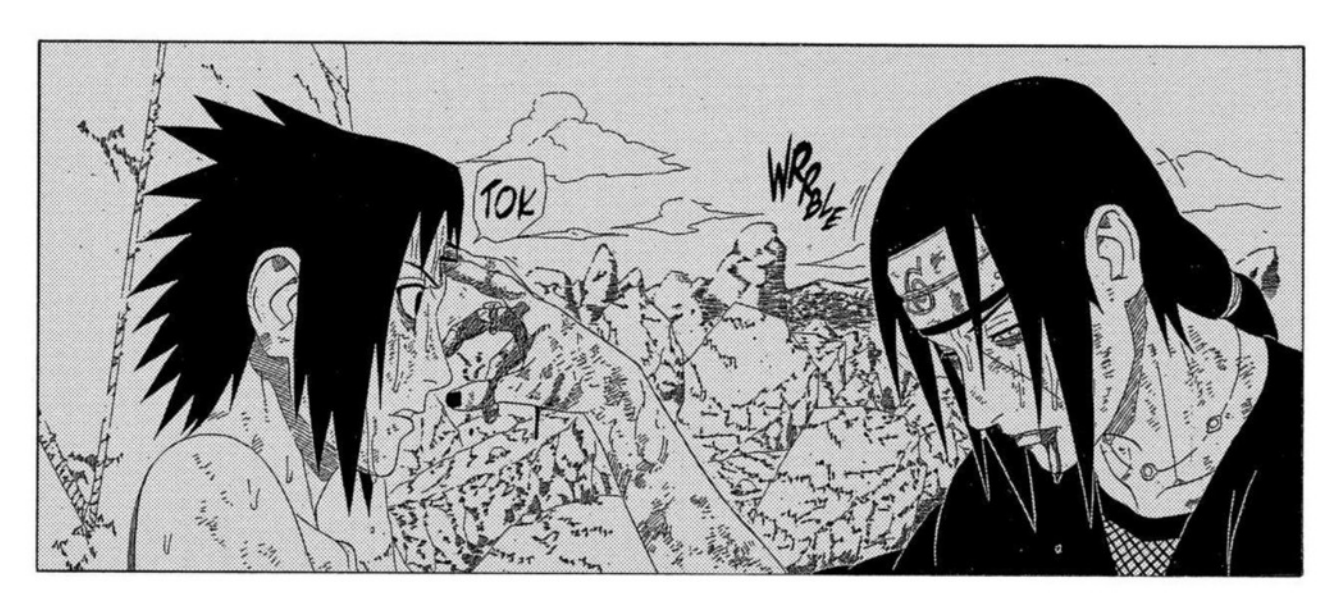
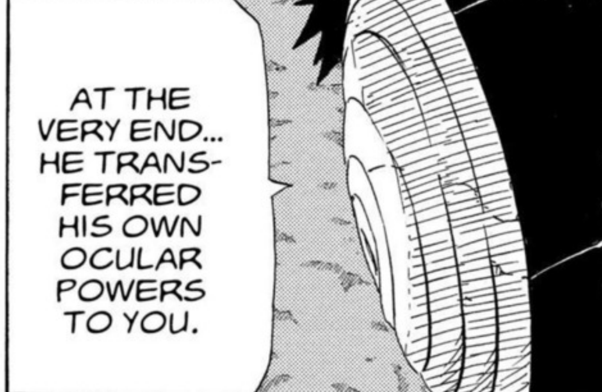

...?


WELL, THANK-FULLY ITACHI **DIDN'T** KNOW EVERY-THING ABOUT ME...
...OR ELSE I **WOULD** BE DEAD.

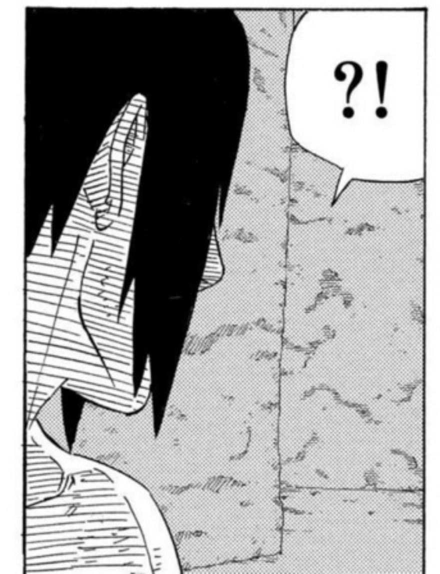

SO THAT WAS ITACHI'S LAST TRICK, EH...
...TOO BAD IT DIDN'T WORK...

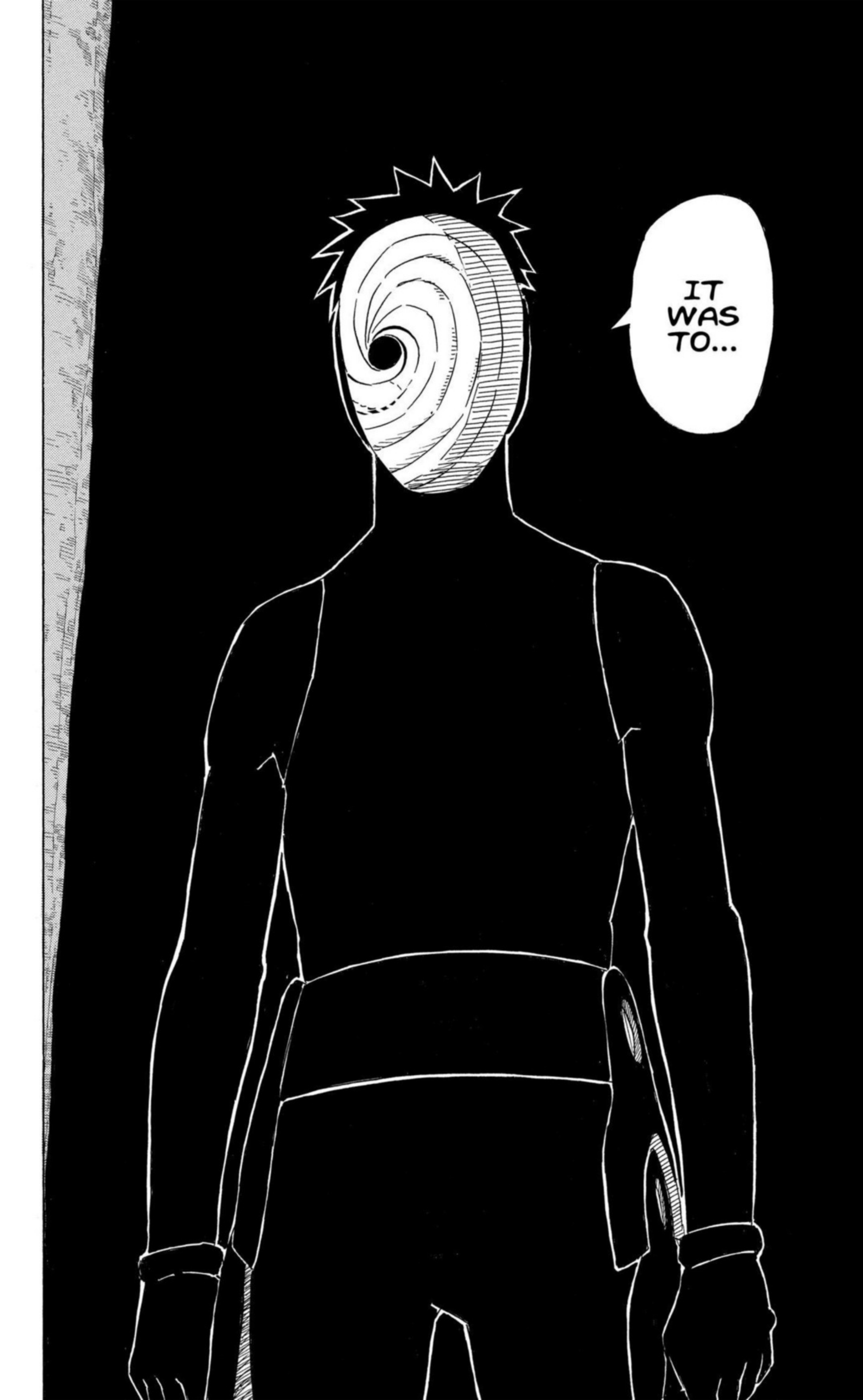

...UH... WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?

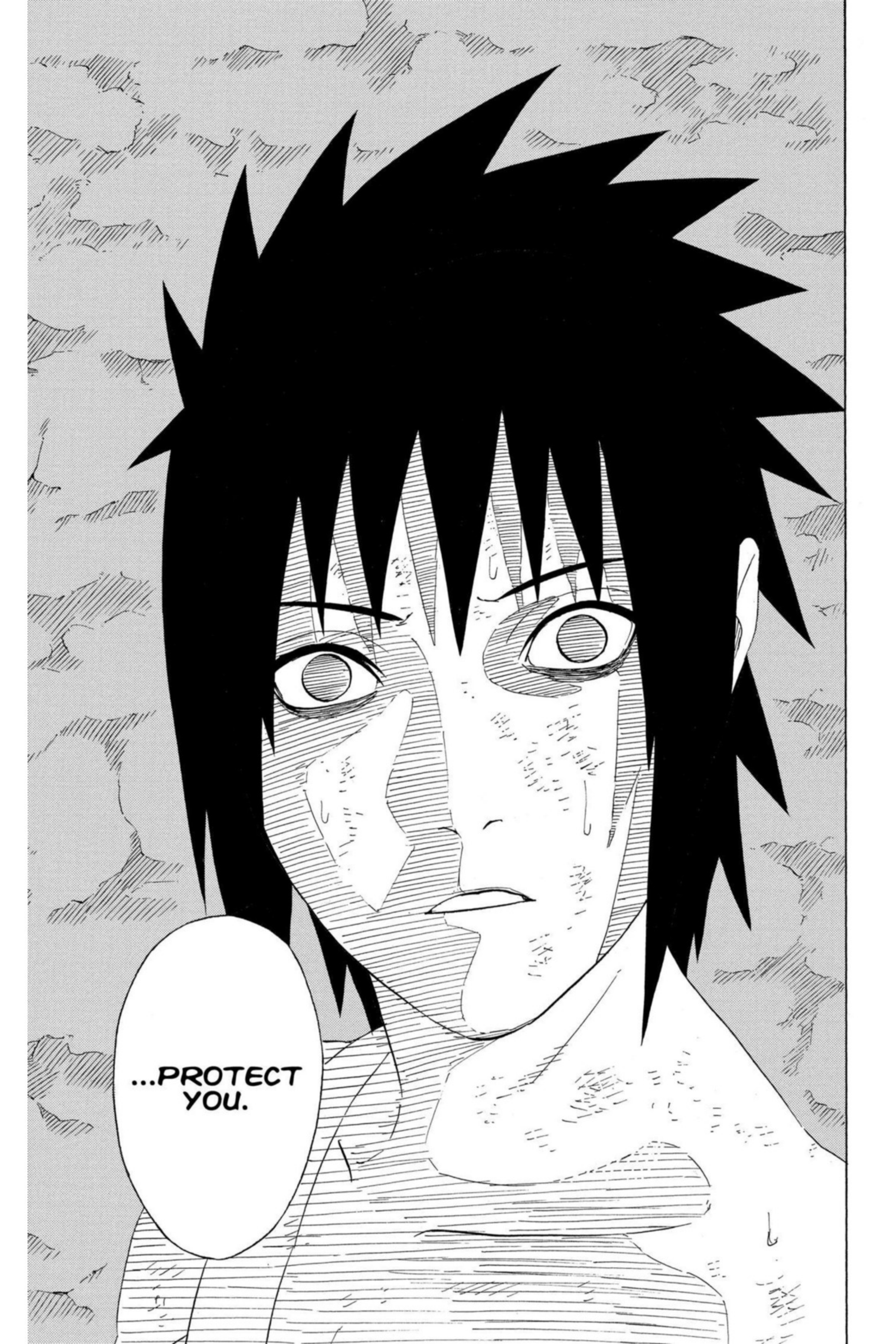

ITACHI MUST HAVE DONE SOMETHING TO YOU BEFORE HE DIED.


!

WRBBLE
TOK

AT THE VERY END... HE TRANS-FERRED HIS OWN OCULAR POWERS TO YOU.

WHAT ARE YOU SAYING ...?
...WHAT EXACTLY IS YOUR POINT?

WHY WOULD ITACHI DO SUCH A THING...
DON'T YOU GET IT?

?!

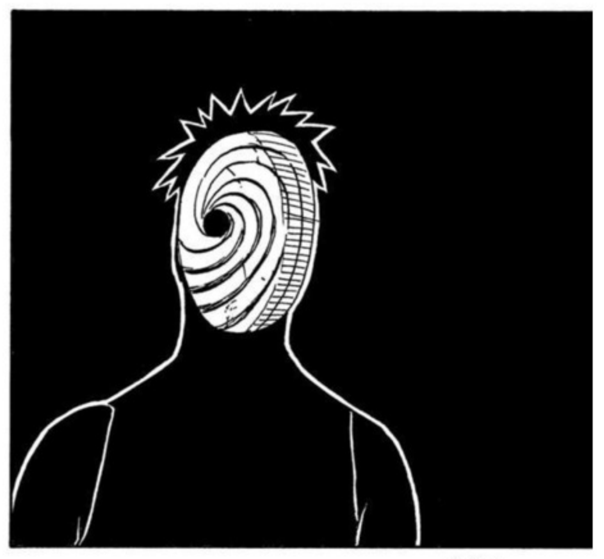

IT WAS TO...


...PROTECT
YOU.



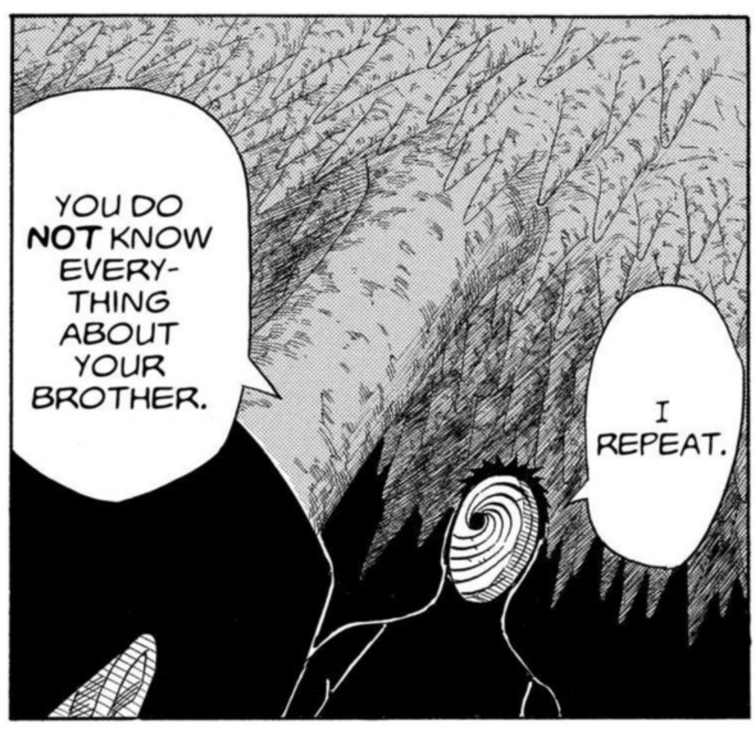
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...

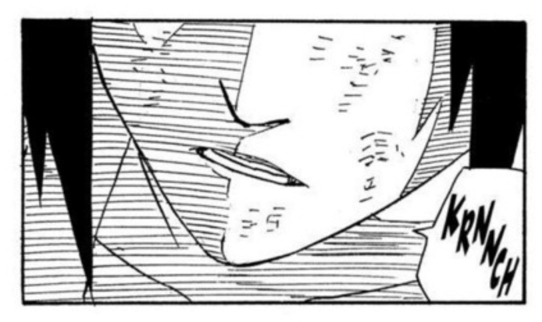
...PROTECT?
TO PROTECT ME...?!


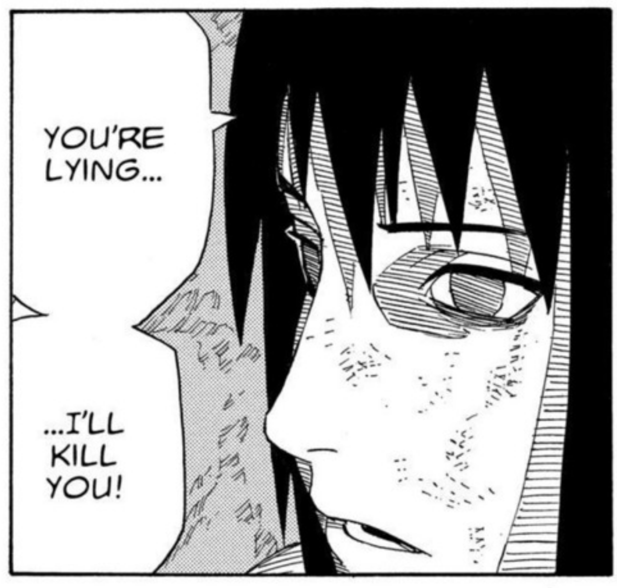
ARE YOU KIDDING...?!

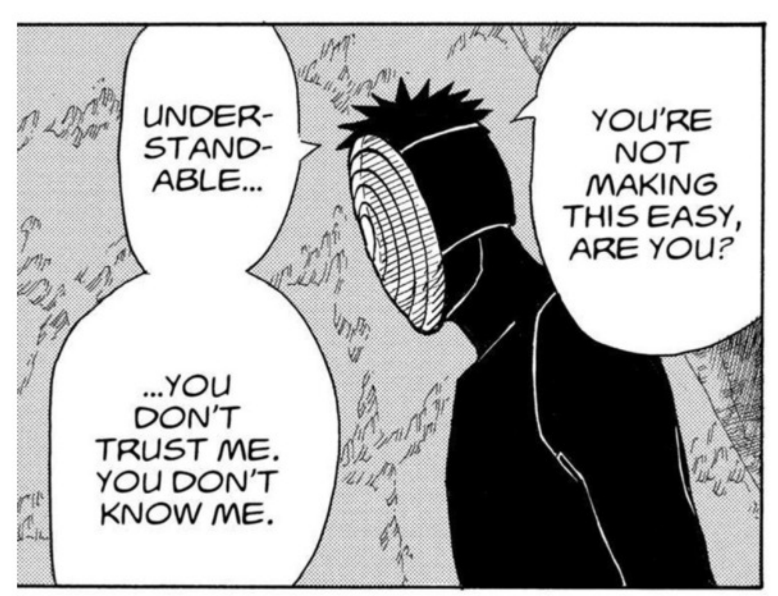

READ THIS WAY


I REPEAT.
YOU DO **NOT** KNOW EVERYTHING ABOUT YOUR BROTHER.

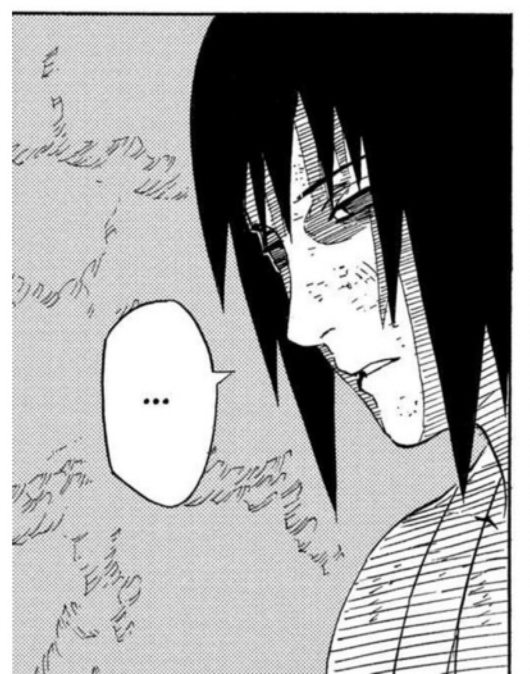

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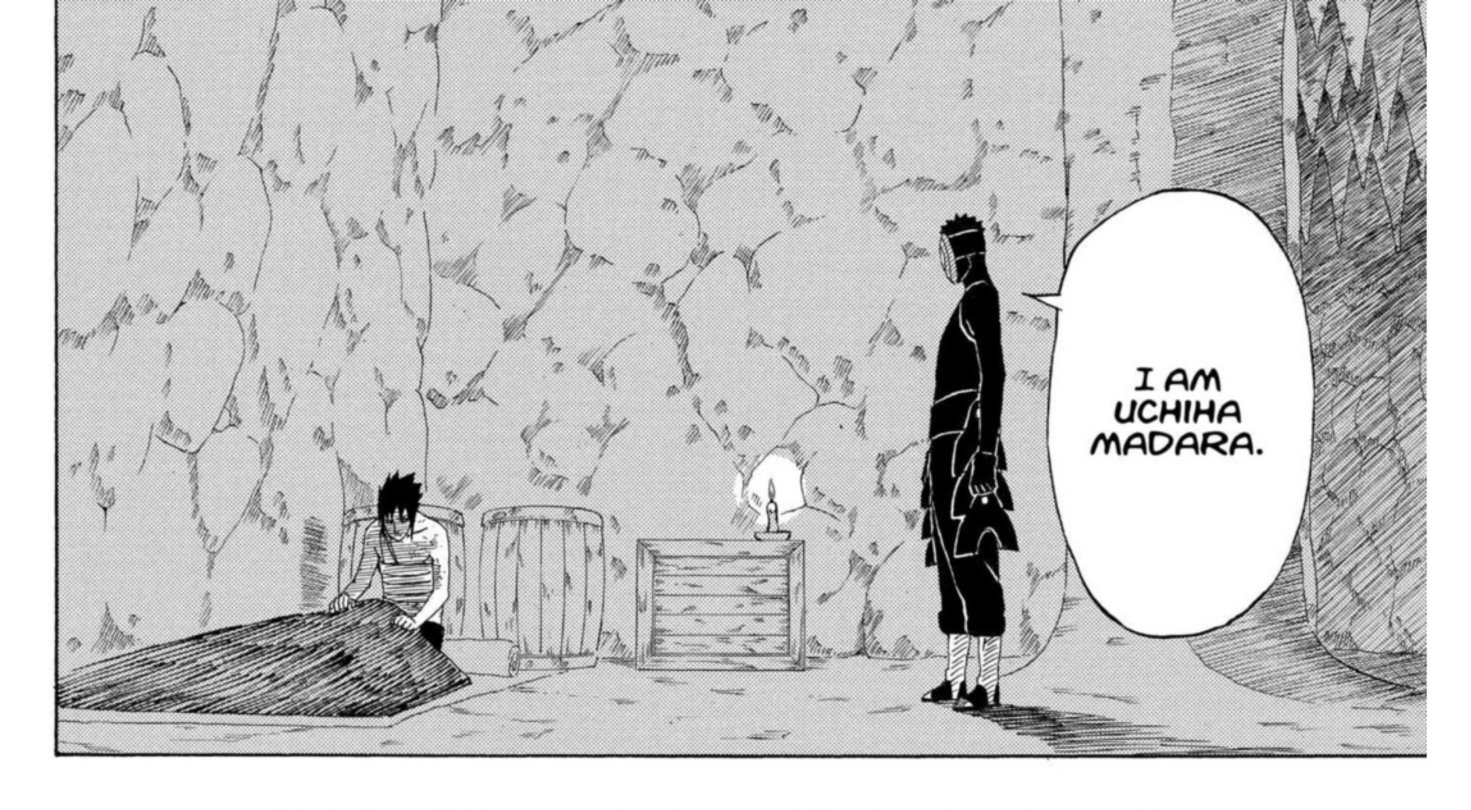

KRNNCH


YOU'RE LYING...
...I'LL KILL YOU!


YOU'RE NOT MAKING THIS EASY, ARE YOU?
UNDER-STAND-ABLE...
...YOU DON'T TRUST ME. YOU DON'T KNOW ME.


BUT... WHAT I AM ABOUT TO TELL YOU **IS** THE TRUTH.
ITACHI DID MENTION IT, DID HE NOT?
HE WAS NOT ALONE THAT NIGHT...?

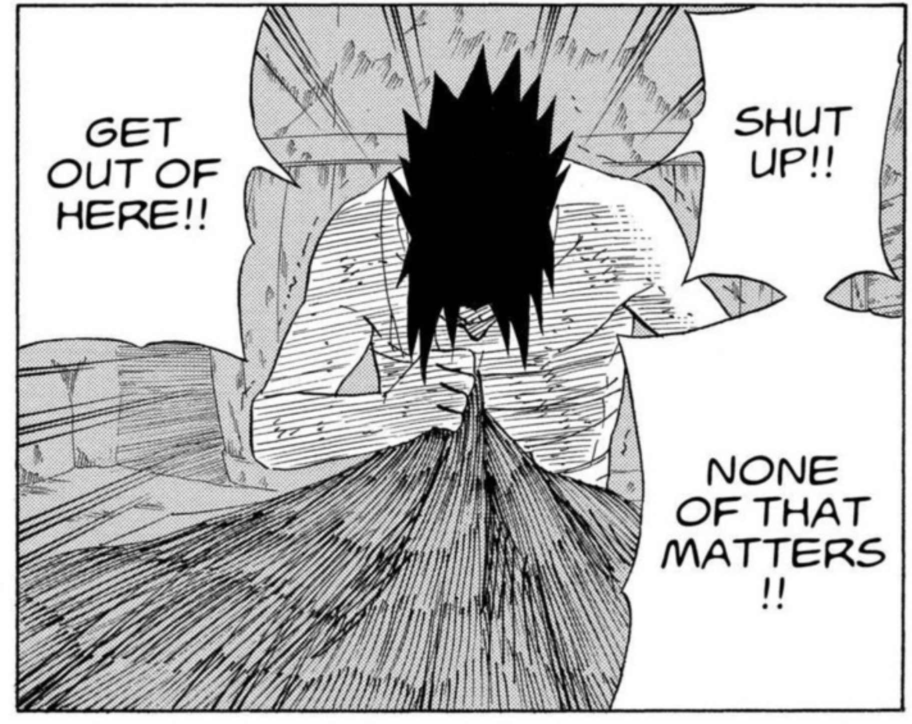

...


I AM UCHIHA MADARA.

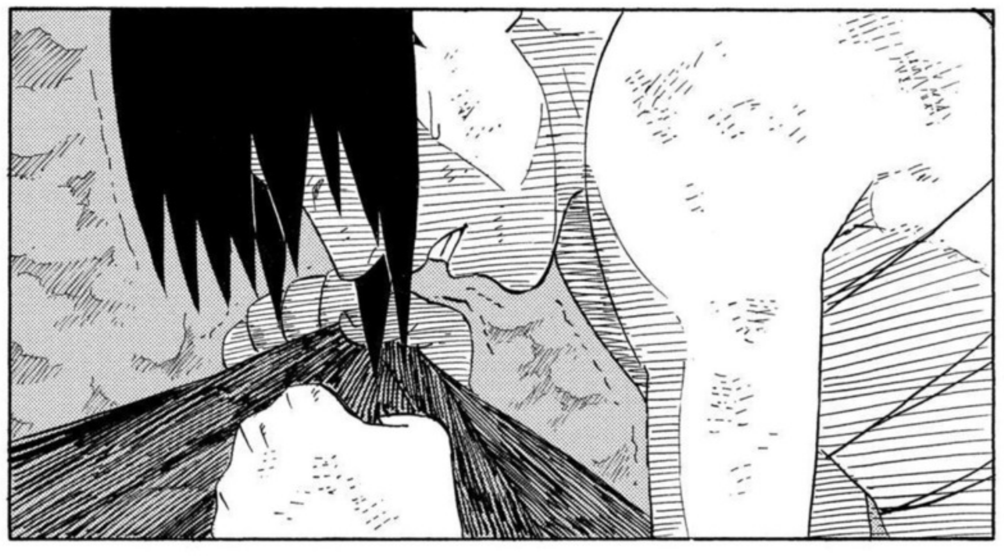



I KNOW EVERY-THING ABOUT ITACHI.
...EVEN ITACHI HIMSELF DID NOT KNOW I KNEW SO MUCH!

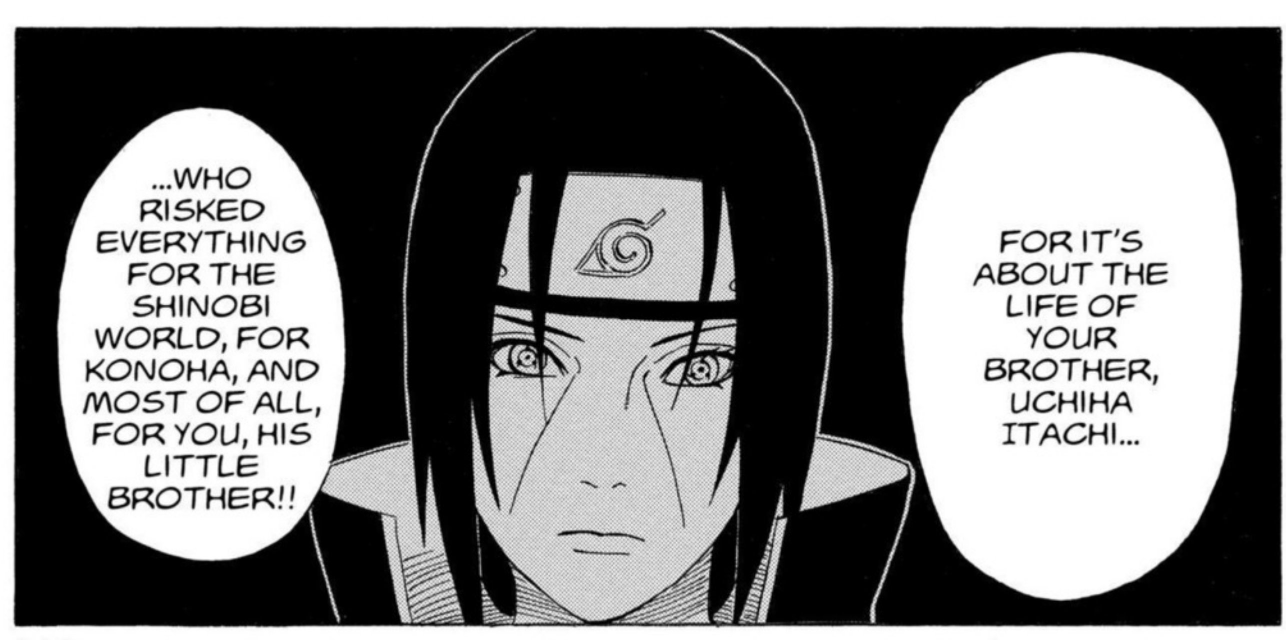

KRNNCH

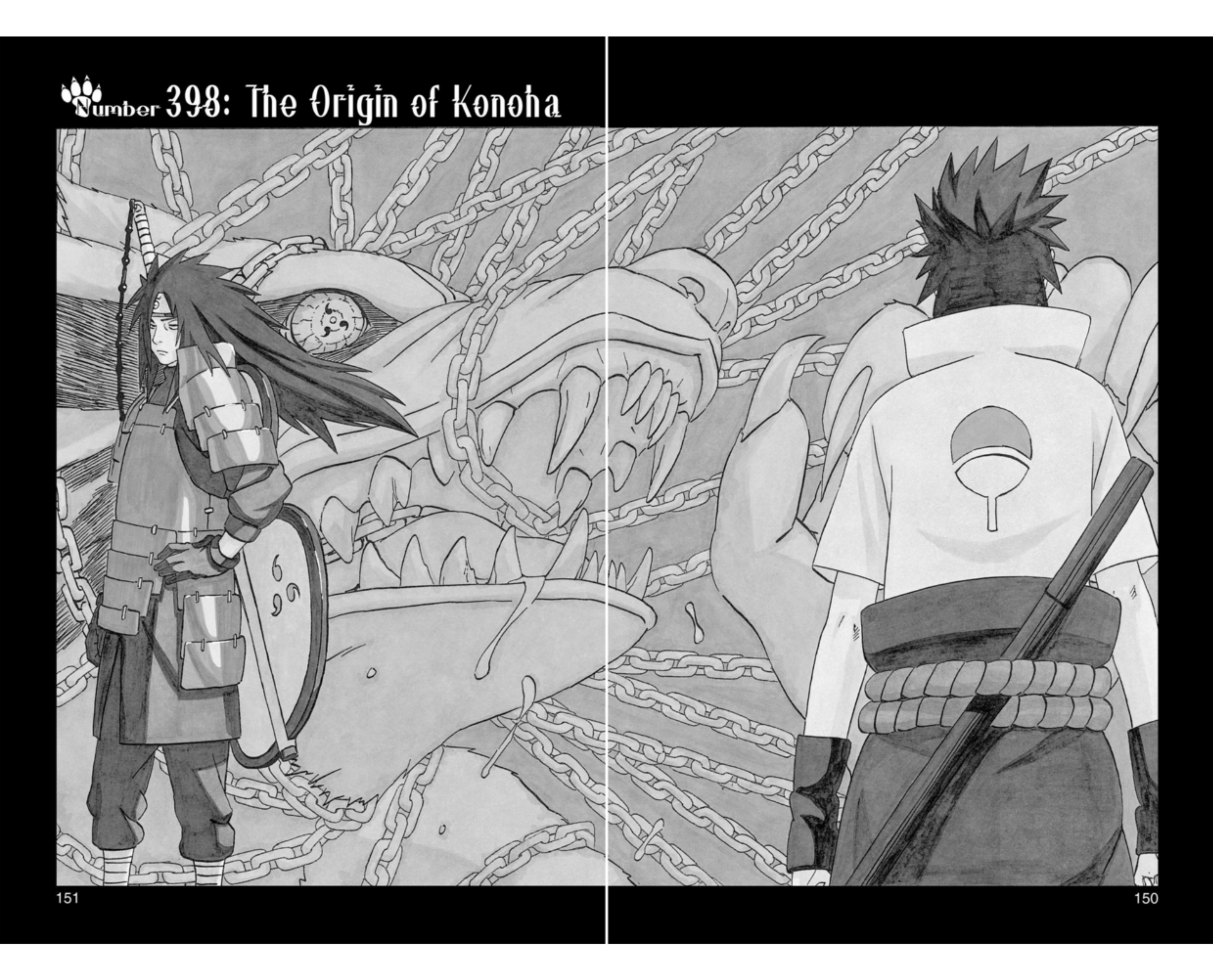

SHUT UP!!
GET OUT OF HERE!!
NONE OF THAT MATTERS!!


NO, YOU'RE GOING TO LISTEN TO ME.
YOU **MUST** HEAR ME OUT!
IT'S YOUR OBLIGATION!

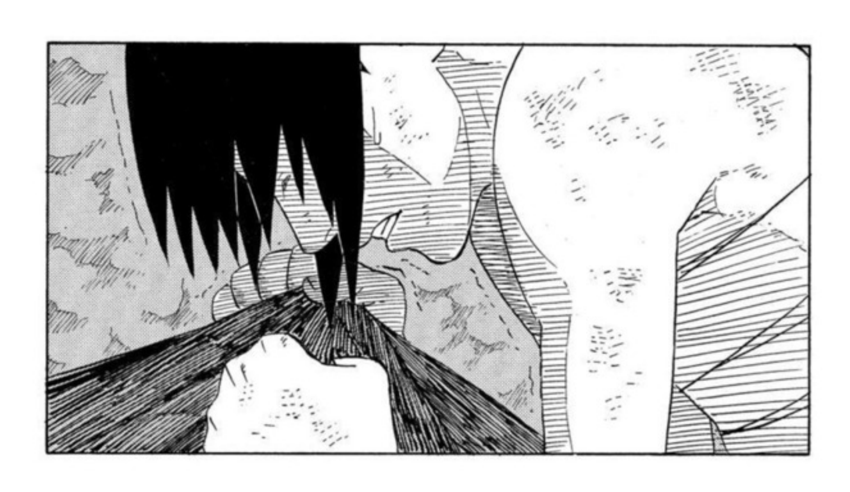



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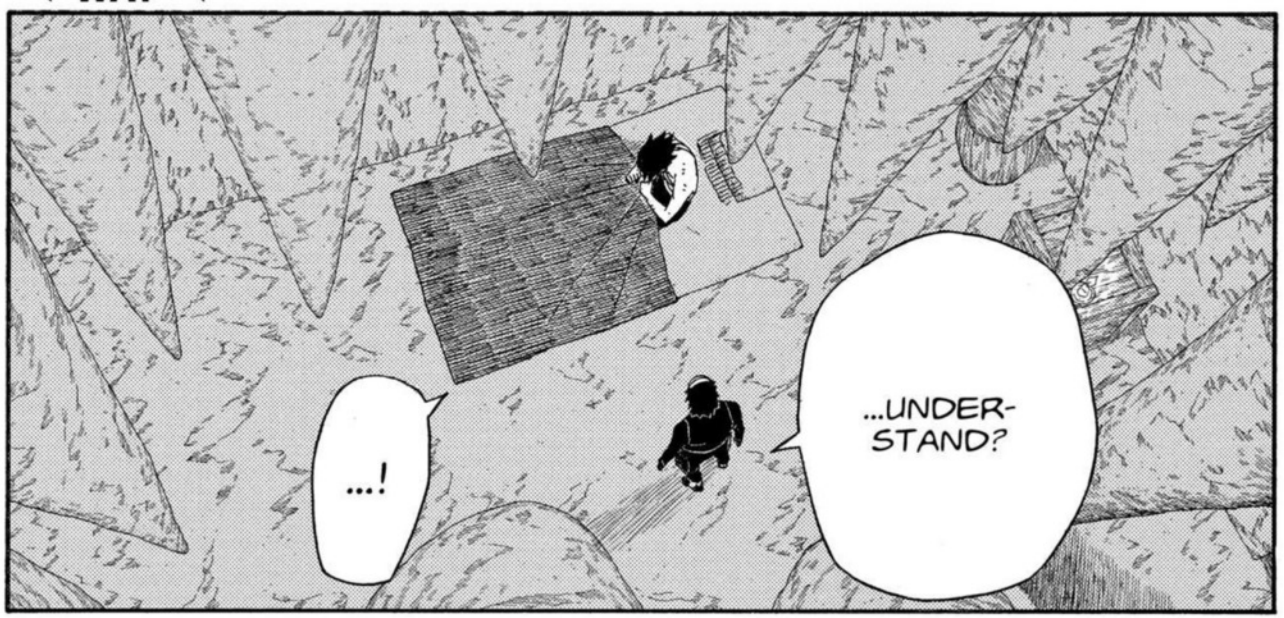

FOR IT'S ABOUT THE LIFE OF YOUR BROTHER, UCHIHA ITACHI...
...WHO RISKED EVERYTHING FOR THE SHINOBI WORLD, FOR KONOHA, AND MOST OF ALL, FOR YOU, HIS LITTLE BROTHER!!

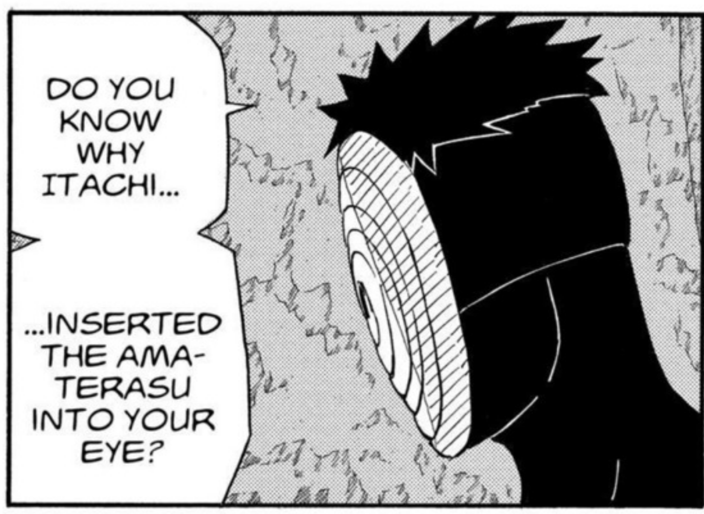

Number 398: The Origin of Konoha

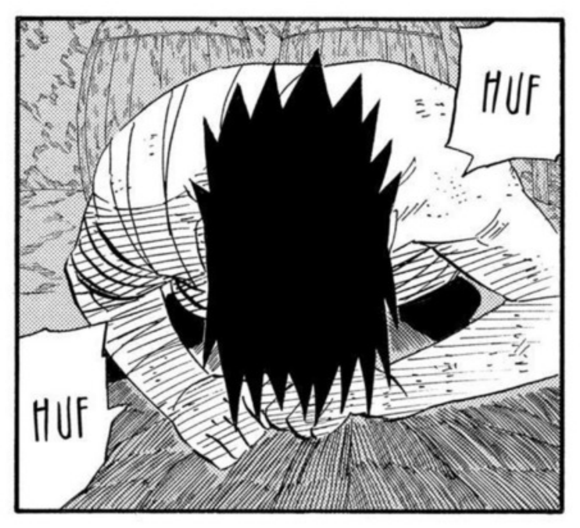

NARUTO



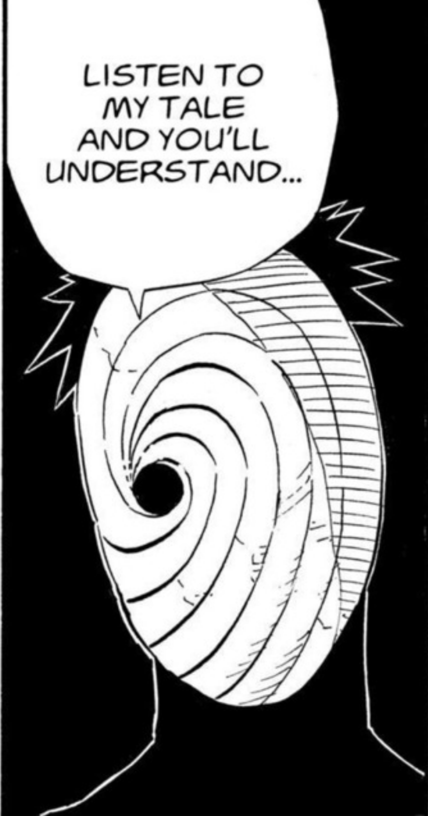

READ THIS WAY

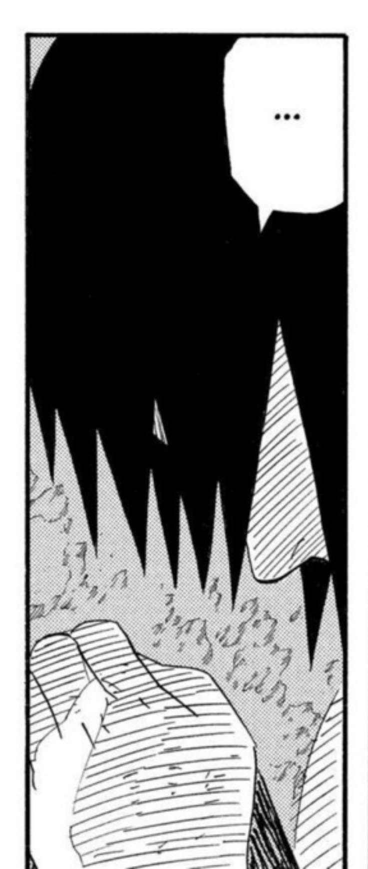

...UNDER-STAND?
...!

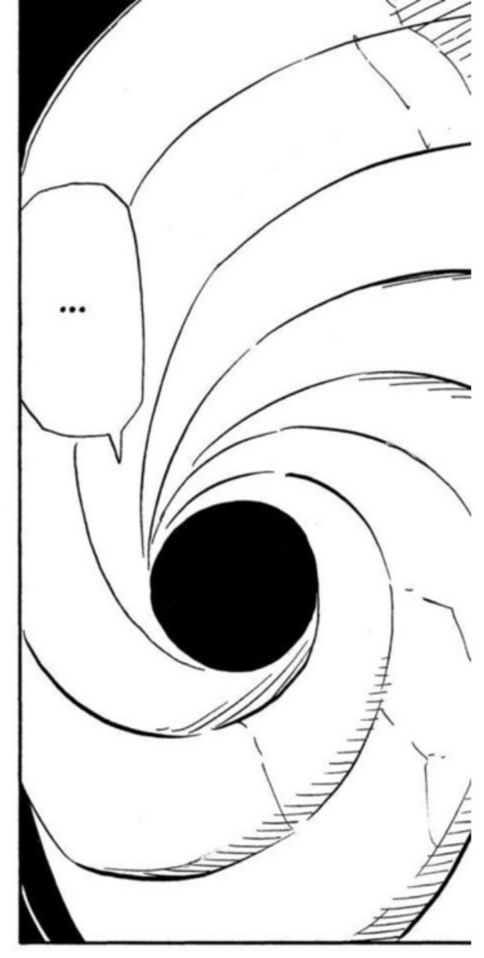

DO YOU KNOW WHY ITACHI...
...INSERTED THE AMA-TERASU INTO YOUR EYE?


HUF
HUF


IT'S BECAUSE ITACHI...
...NEVER WANTED US TO MEET, TO TALK...


LISTEN TO MY TALE AND YOU'LL UNDERSTAND...

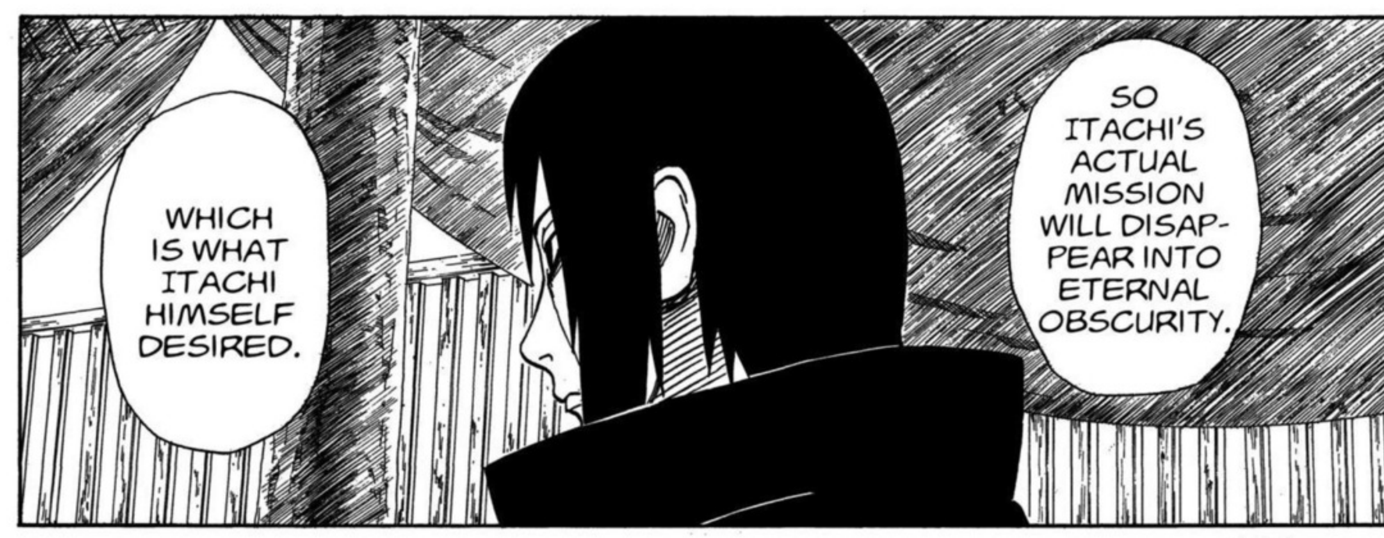

...


...


ONLY DANZO, THE THIRD HOKAGE...
...AND THE TWO COUNSELORS HOMURA AND KOHARU KNEW THE REAL TRUTH.

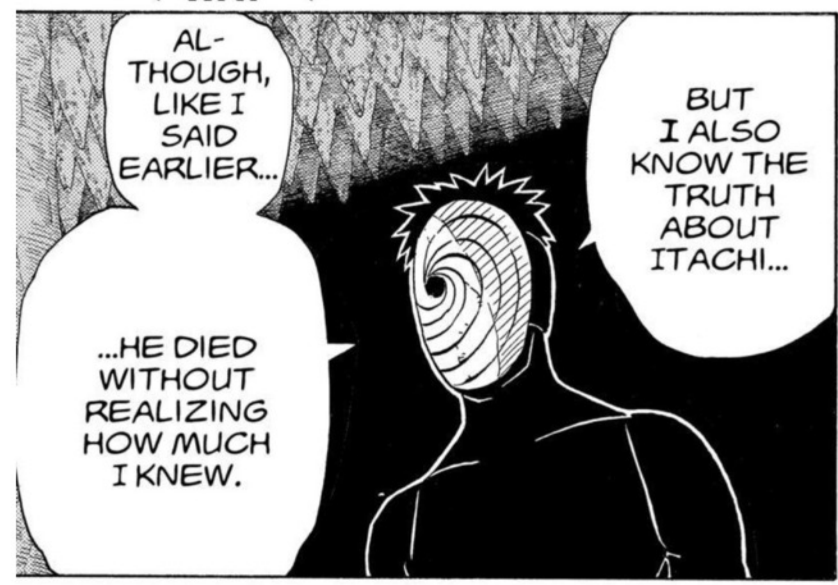

WITH THE THIRD HOKAGE DEAD...
...ONLY THREE ELDERS ARE LEFT WHO KNOW THE SECRET...

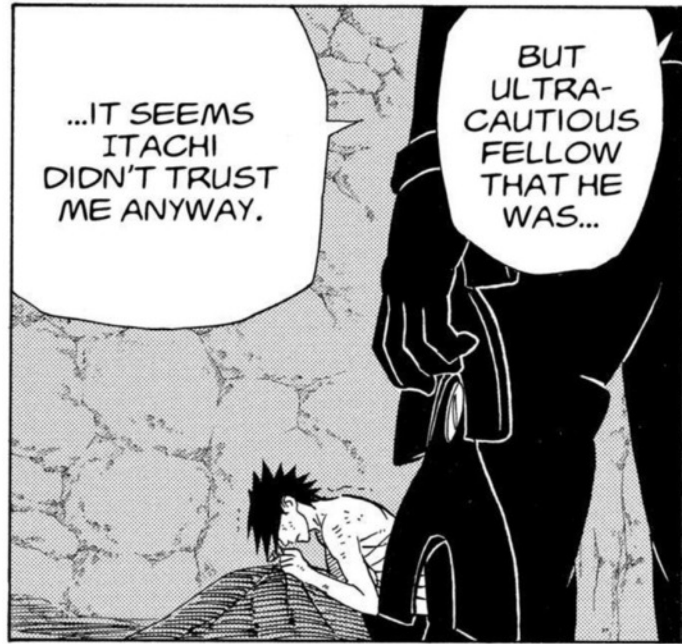

AND NONE...
...ARE LIKELY TO EVER TELL ANYONE THE TRUTH...

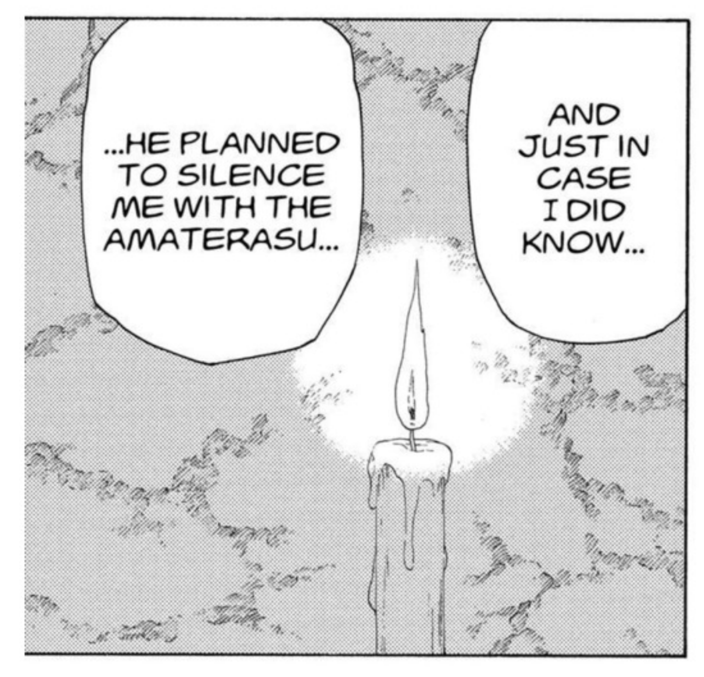

SO ITACHI'S ACTUAL MISSION WILL DISAP-PEAR INTO ETERNAL OBSCURITY.
WHICH IS WHAT ITACHI HIMSELF DESIRED.

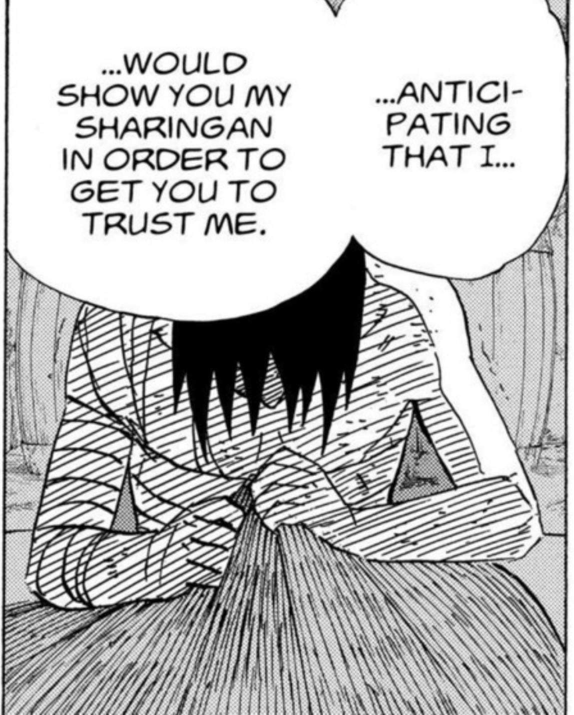

READ THIS WAY


...


BUT I ALSO KNOW THE TRUTH ABOUT ITACHI...
ALTHOUGH, LIKE I SAID EARLIER...
...HE DIED WITHOUT REALIZING HOW MUCH I KNEW.

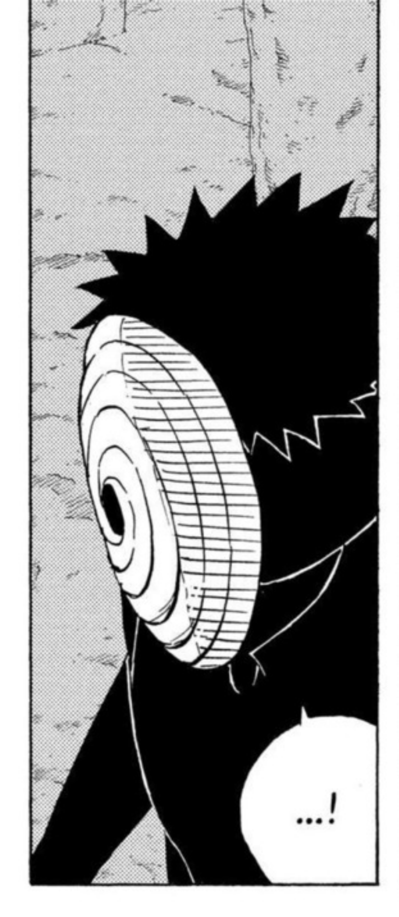

BUT ULTRA-CAUTIOUS FELLOW THAT HE WAS...
...IT SEEMS ITACHI DIDN'T TRUST ME ANYWAY.


AND JUST IN CASE I DID KNOW...
...HE PLANNED TO SILENCE ME WITH THE AMATERASU...

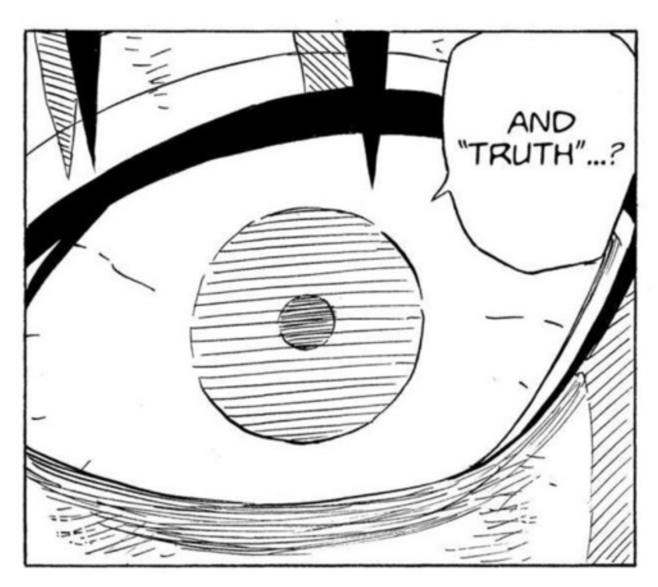

...ANTICIPATING THAT I...
...WOULD SHOW YOU MY SHARINGAN IN ORDER TO GET YOU TO TRUST ME.

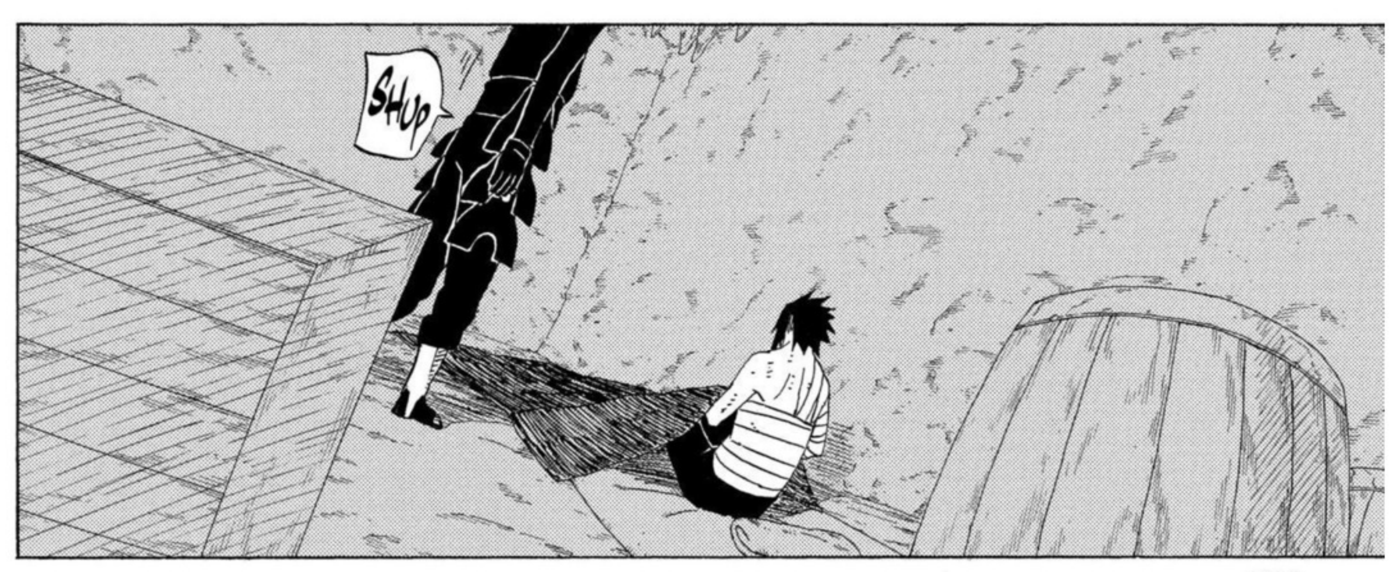

WHAT... ARE YOU SAYING?


WHAT ARE YOU SAYING?


...!

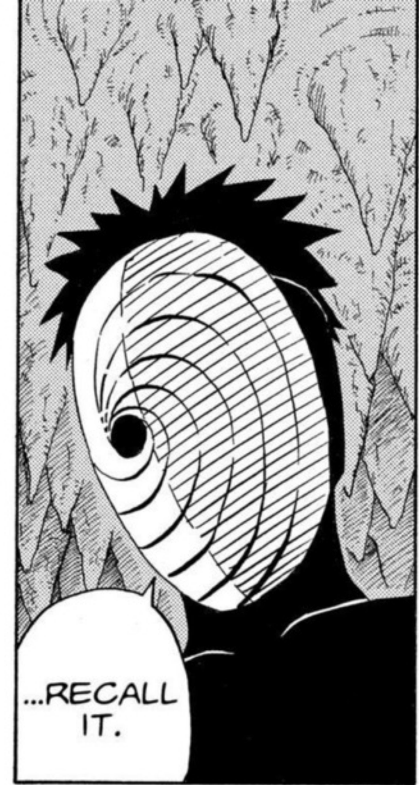

PROTECT ME...?
..."PRO-TECT" ...???

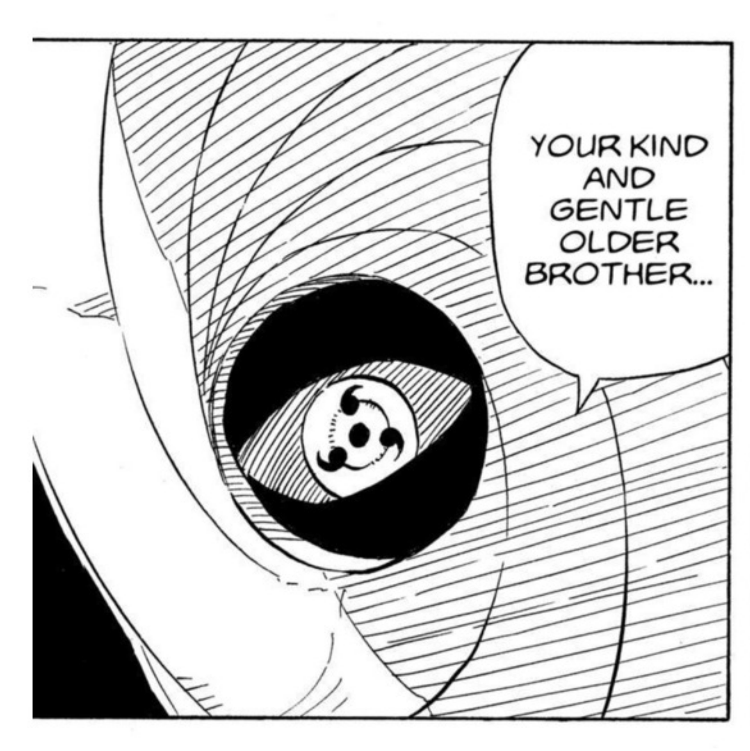

AND "TRUTH"...?

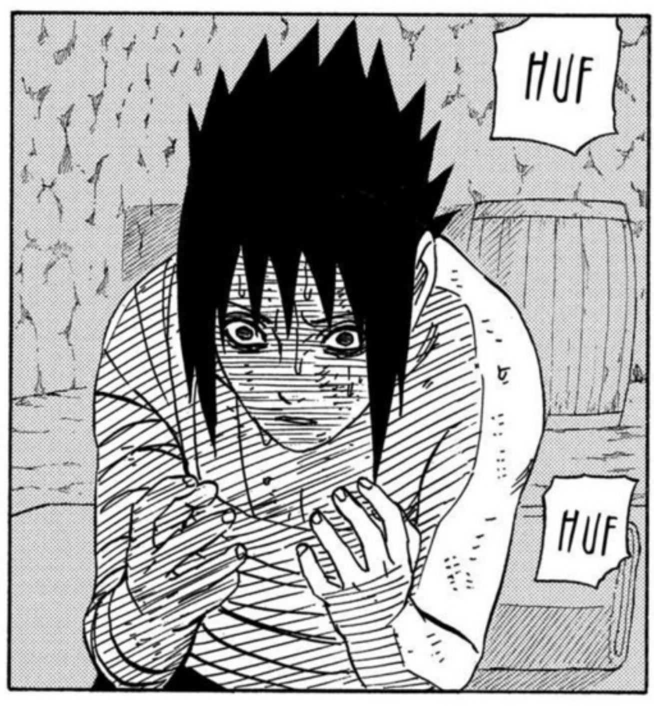

SHUP

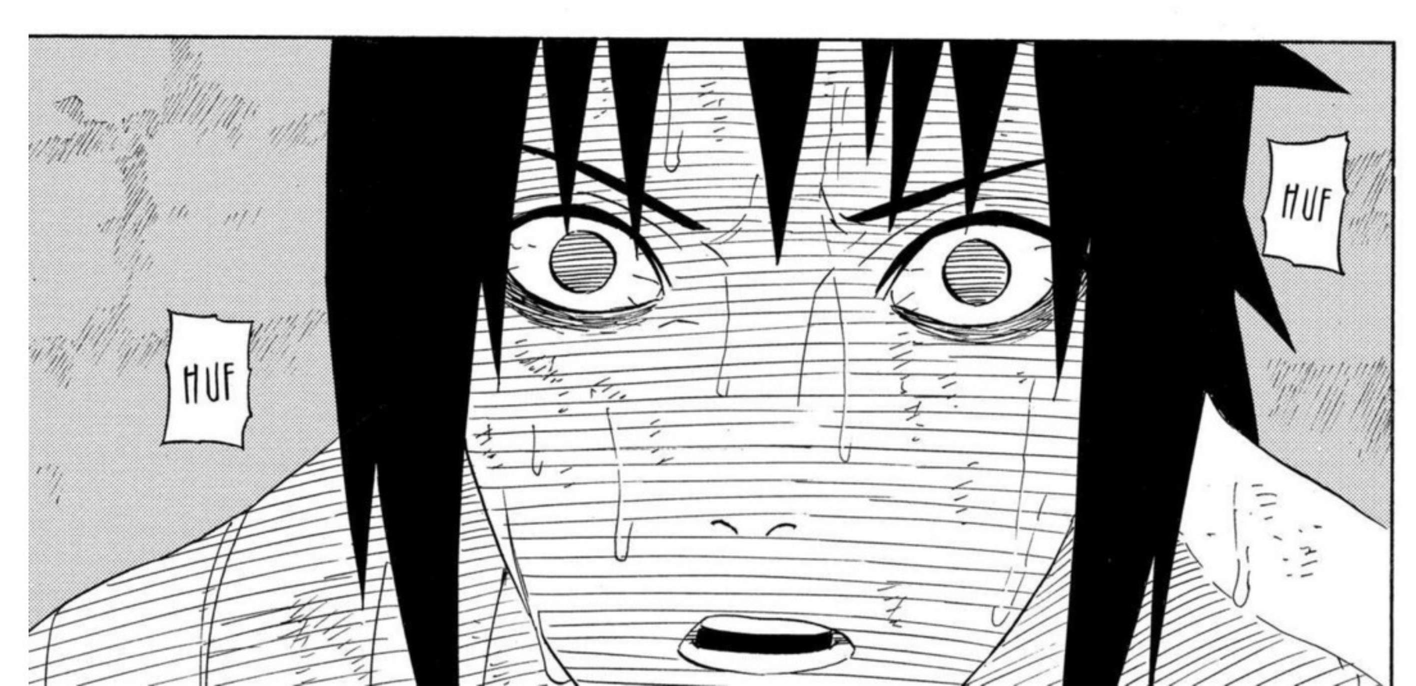

THINK BACK AND REMEMBER ITACHI.

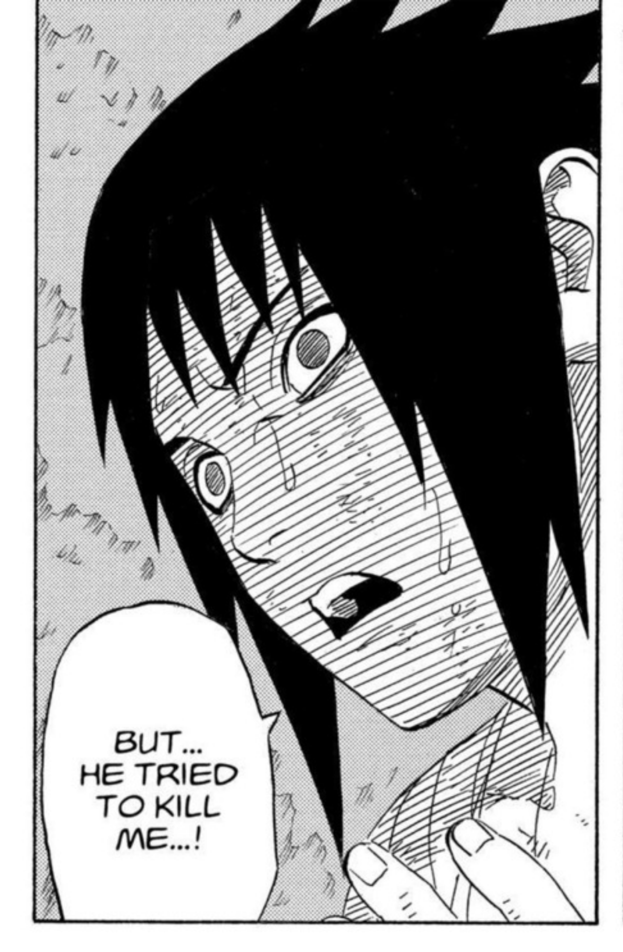
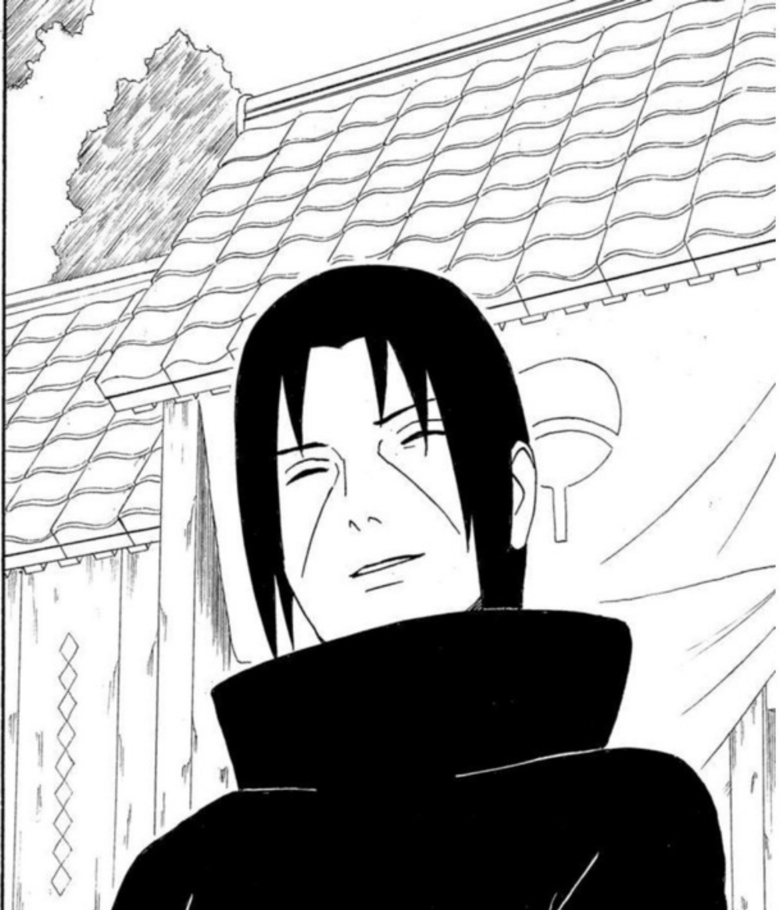

TICK


...RECALL IT.


YOUR KIND AND GENTLE OLDER BROTHER...


HUF
HUF


HUF
HUF


BUT... HE TRIED TO KILL ME...!


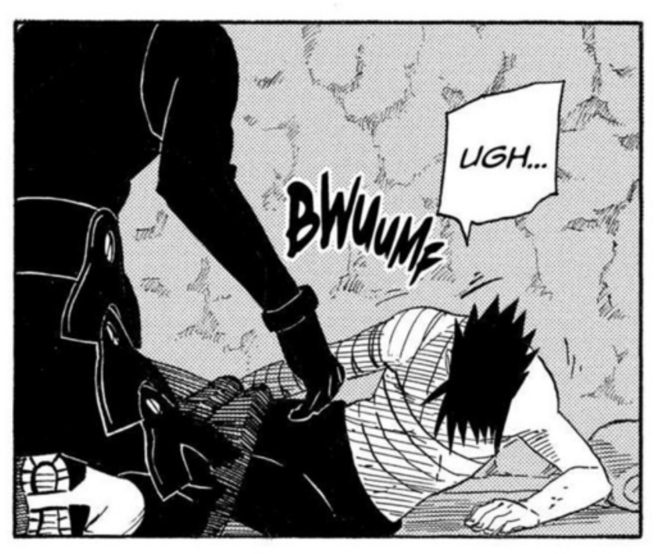
HACK!
COUGH !!
TMP

TRIED TO STEAL MY EYES...!

DON'T TOUCH ME!!
THWAP

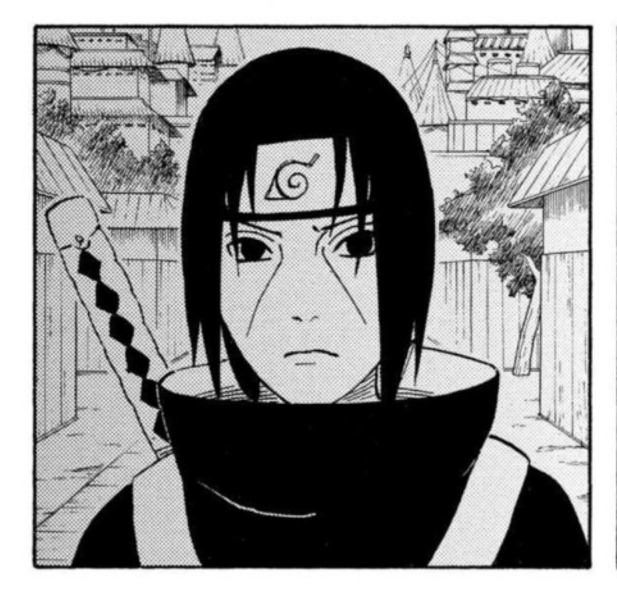
CALM DOWN...
TAKE SLOW, DEEP BREATHS.
SHUCK

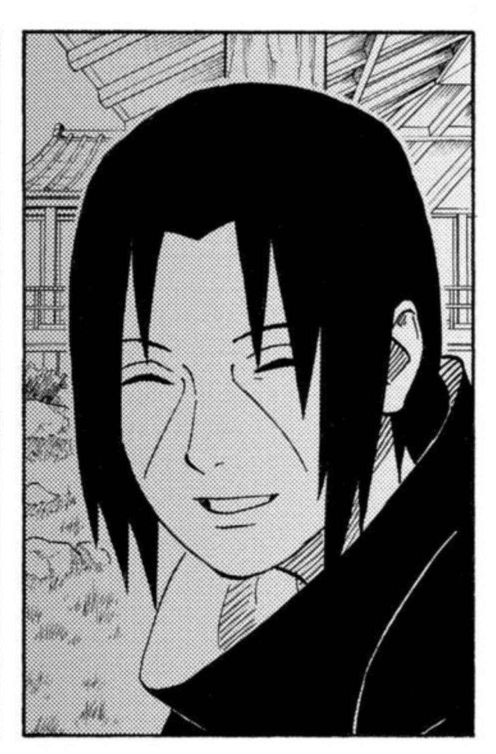

READ THIS WAY

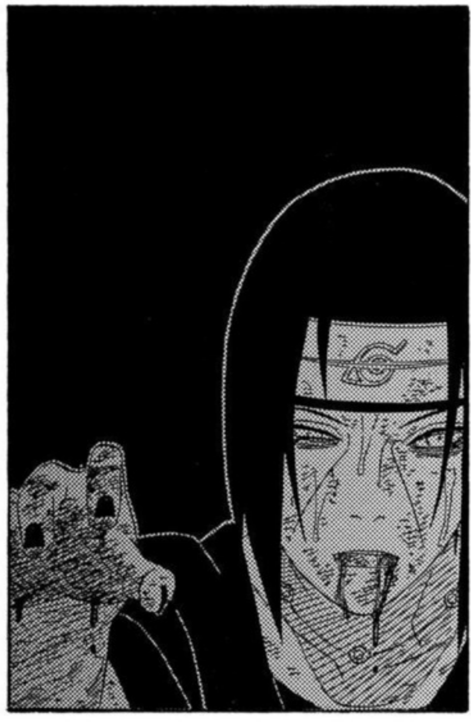

UGH...
BWUUMF

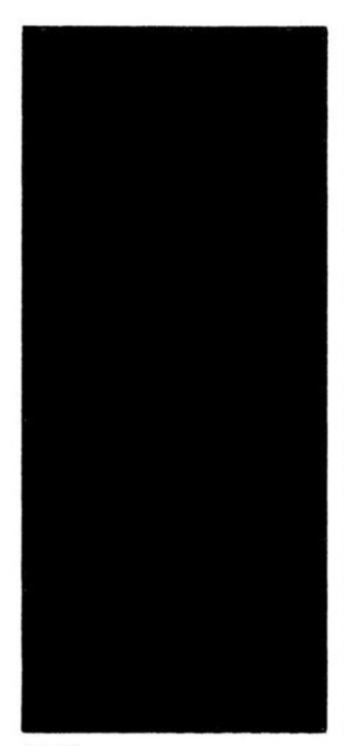

HUF
HUF



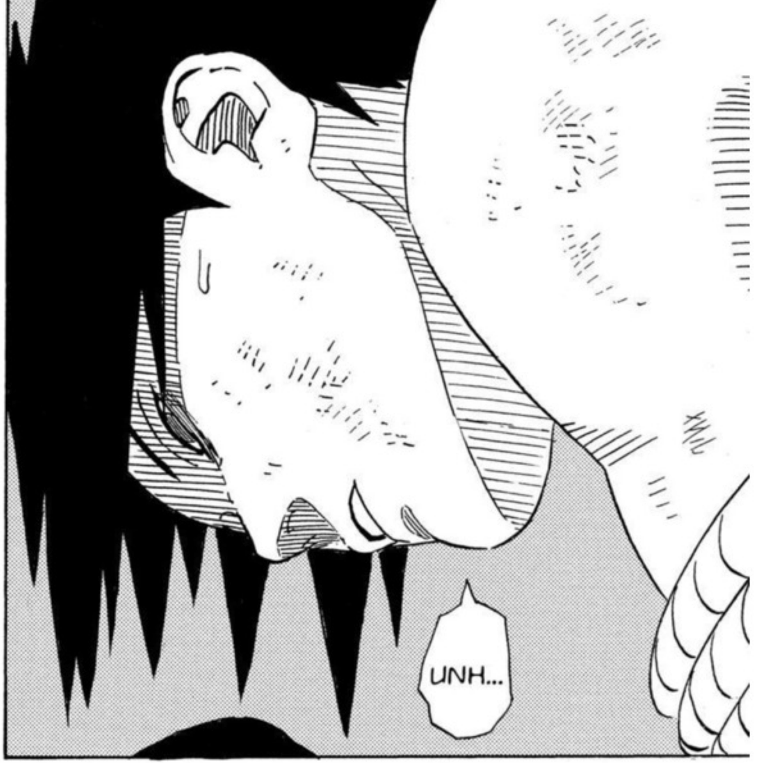


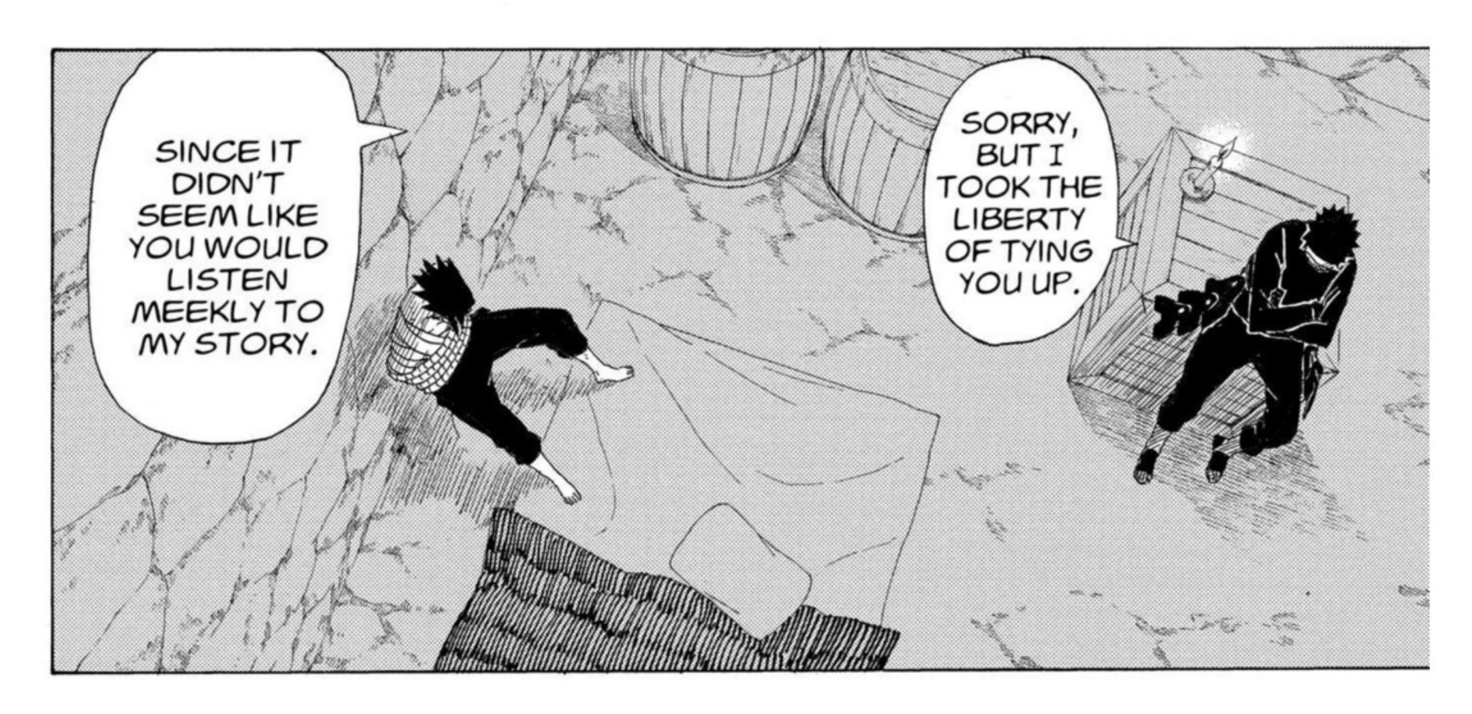






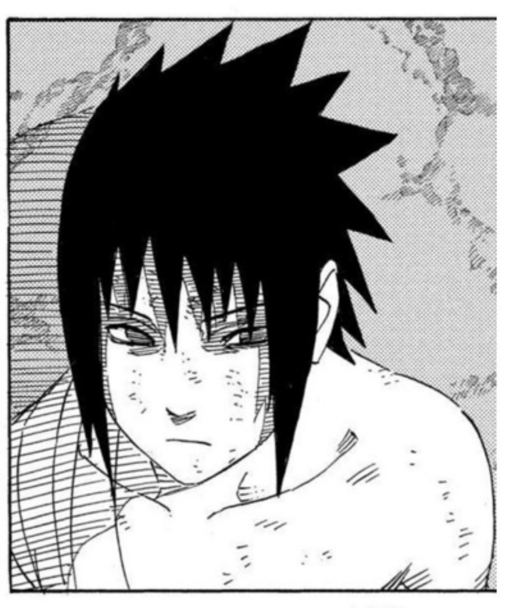

AWAKE AGAIN...?


UNH...

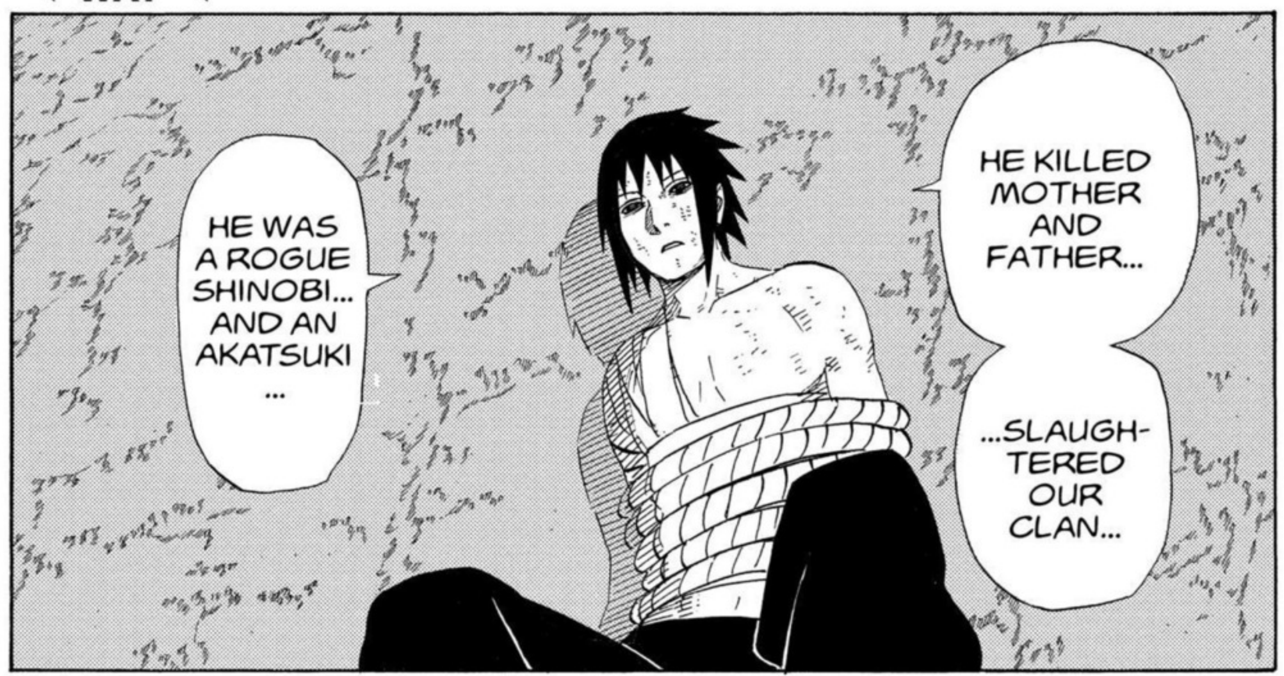

SORRY, BUT I TOOK THE LIBERTY OF TYING YOU UP.
SINCE IT DIDN'T SEEM LIKE YOU WOULD LISTEN MEEKLY TO MY STORY.


...HE...
...ITACHI WAS THE ENEMY...





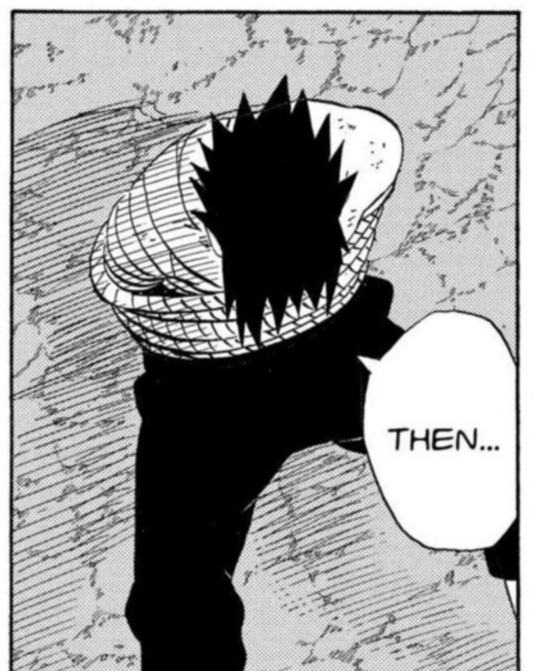

READ THIS WAY


HE KILLED MOTHER AND FATHER...
...SLAUGHTERED OUR CLAN...
HE WAS A ROGUE SHINOBI... AND AN AKATSUKI ...

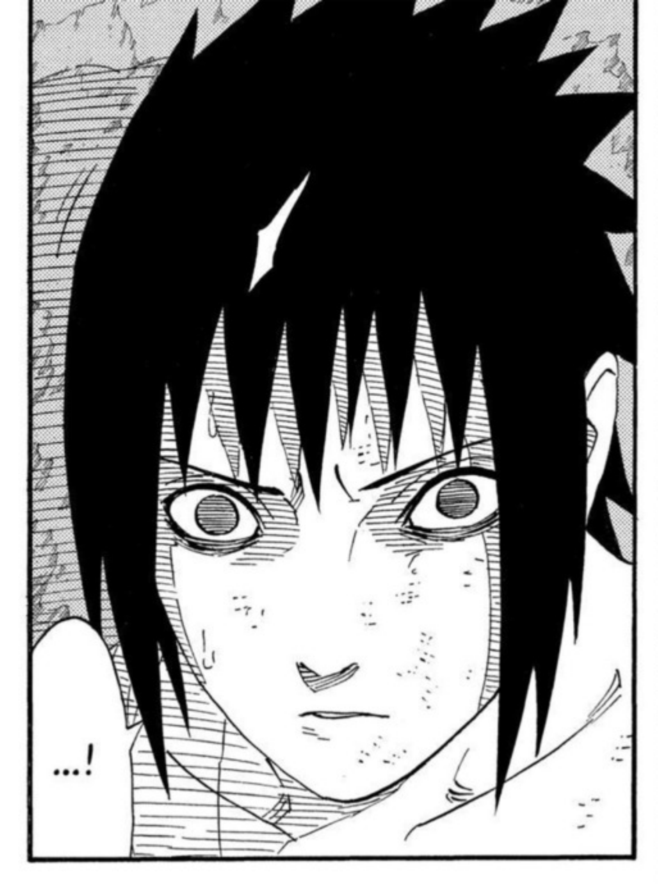

HE WAS DESPICABLE...

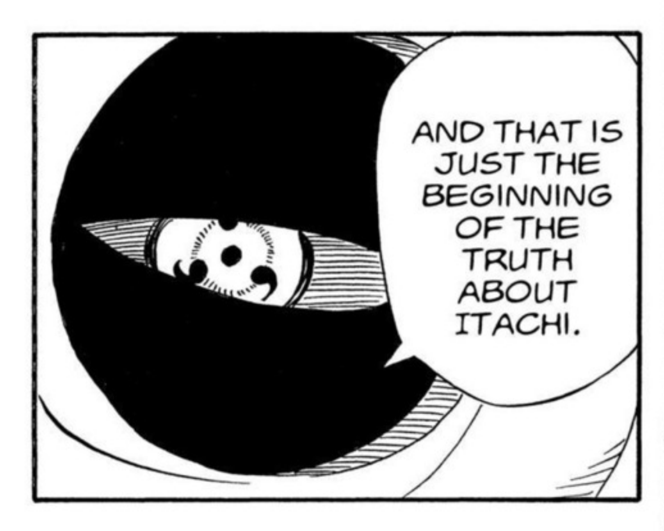

...AND MY GOAL...


THAT NIGHT...
...IT IS TRUE THAT HE SLAUGHTERED THE ENTIRE UCHIHA CLAN...
...AND FLED THE VILLAGE...

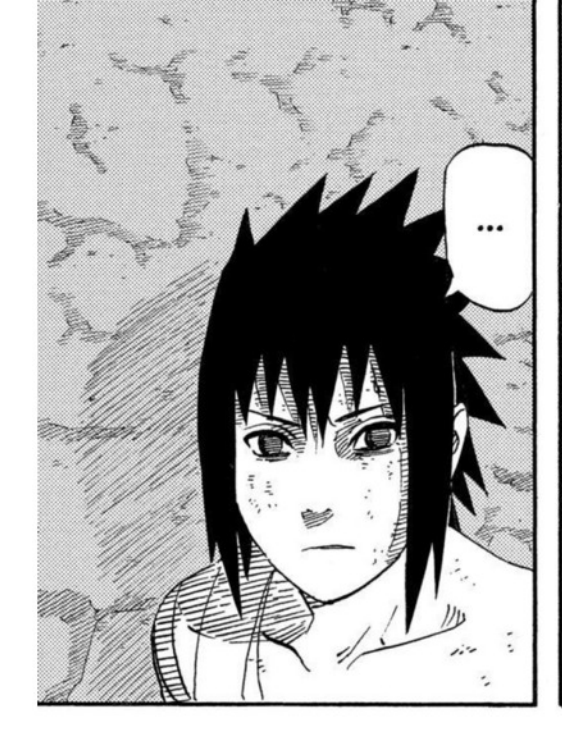

THEN...

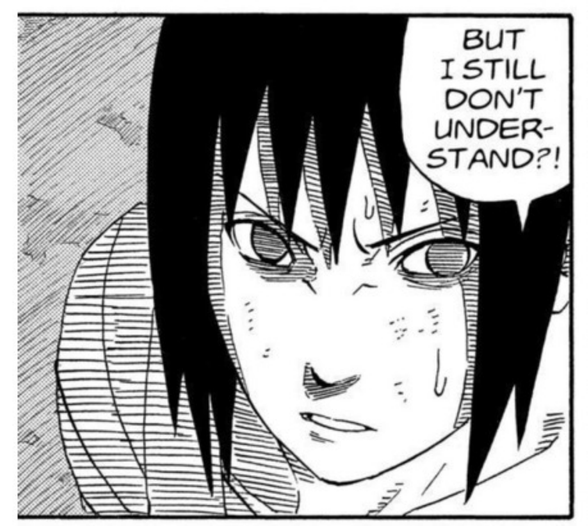
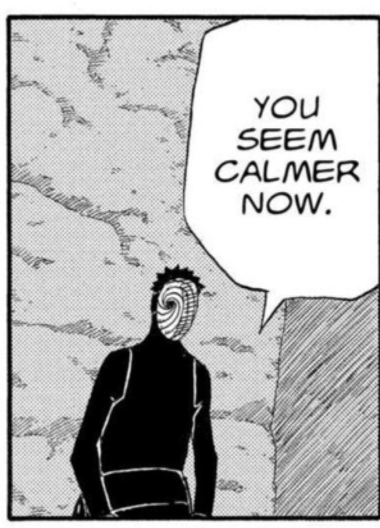
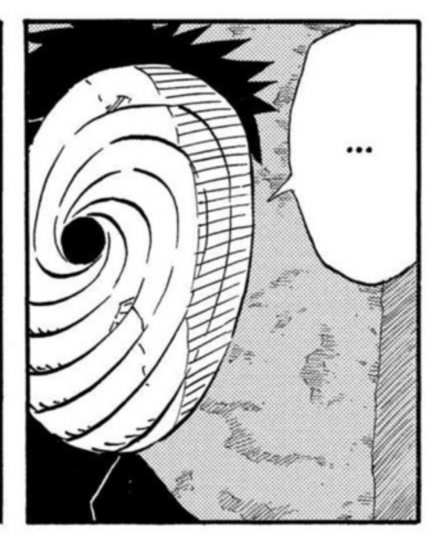
...BUT HE WAS ORDERED TO DO SO BY KONOHA.







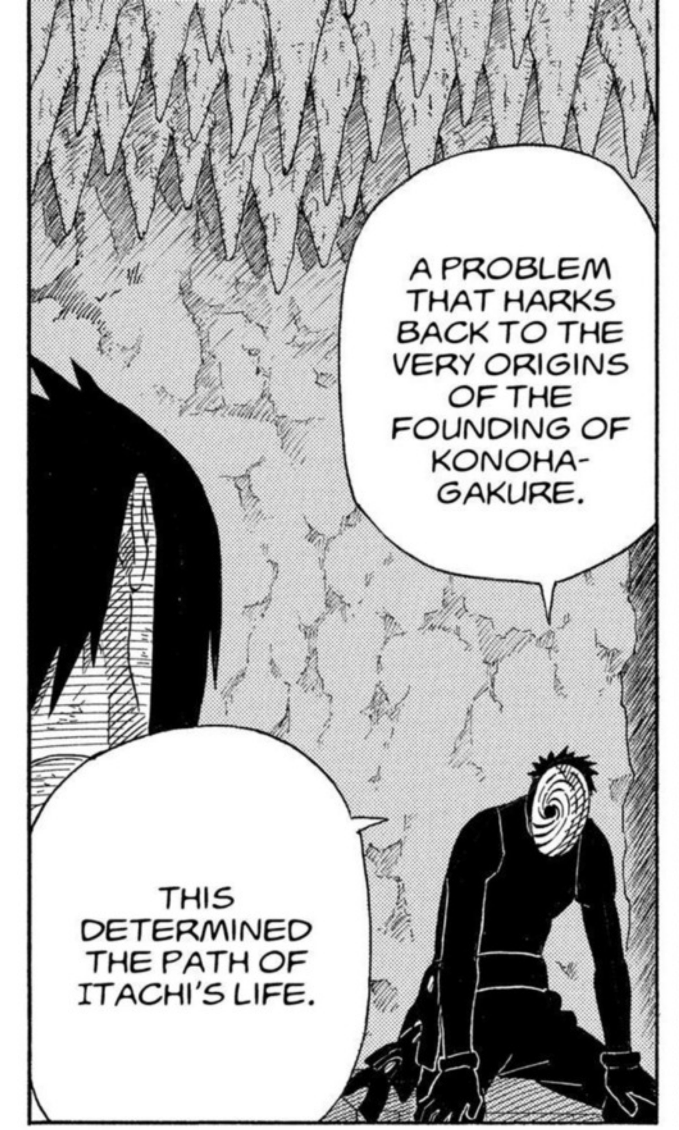

...

THAT'S RIGHT. ITACHI COMPLETED HIS ASSIGNMENT THAT NIGHT...
...BY SLAUGHTERING EVERYONE.

BUT I STILL DON'T UNDERSTAND?!

YOU SEEM CALMER NOW.

...

?

IN ORDER TO EXPLAIN ITACHI'S STORY...
...I MUST GO BACK TO THE BEGINNING.


ITACHI ENDED UP BEING A SACRIFICIAL PAWN...
...IN A LONG-STANDING POWER STRUGGLE...

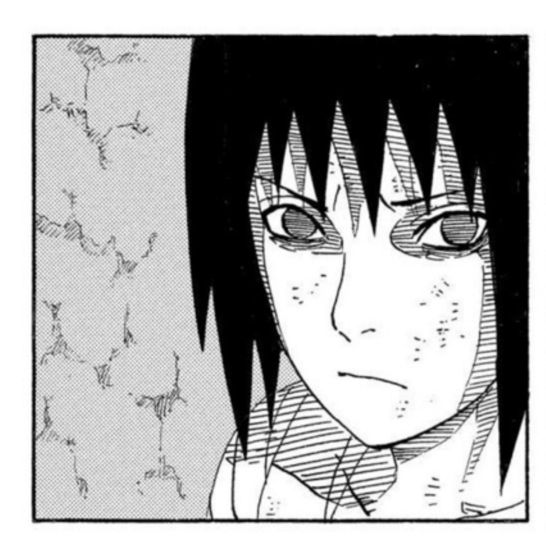

A PROBLEM THAT HARKS BACK TO THE VERY ORIGINS OF THE FOUNDING OF KONOHA-GAKURE.
THIS DETERMINED THE PATH OF ITACHI'S LIFE.


...SACRI-FICIAL PAWN...?

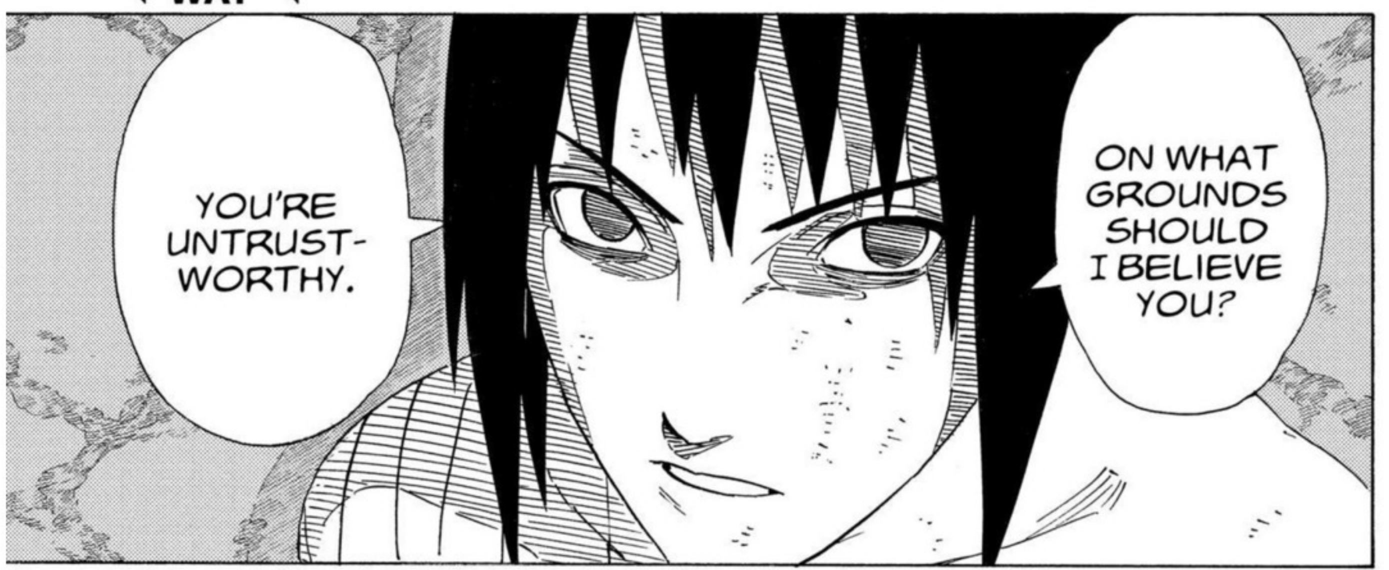

THAT'S RIGHT.


...


...IT'S GOING TO BE A LONG TALE...
...BUT EVERY-THING I AM ABOUT TO TELL YOU IS TRUE.

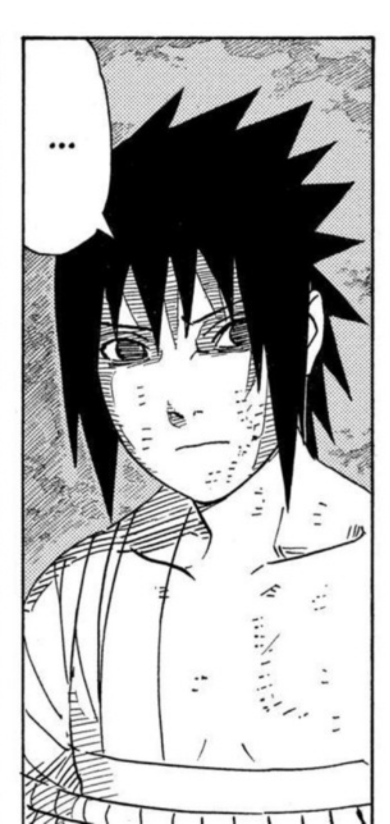



READ
THIS
WAY


ON WHAT GROUNDS SHOULD I BELIEVE YOU?
YOU'RE UNTRUST-WORTHY.


I DON'T HAVE ANY EVIDENCE I CAN SHOW YOU.
SO YOU'LL JUST HAVE TO DECIDE WHETHER YOU BELIEVE MY TALE OR NOT.

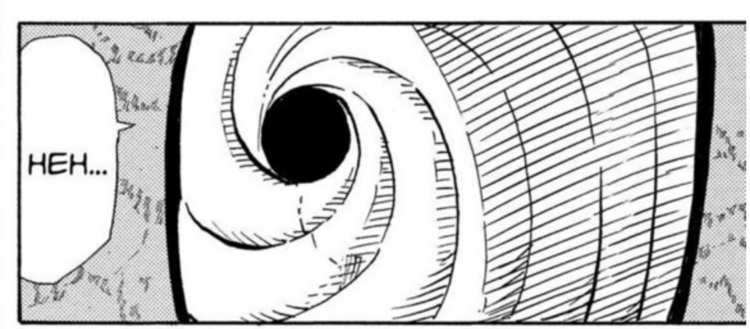

...**AFTER** YOU LISTEN TO THE ENTIRE STORY.

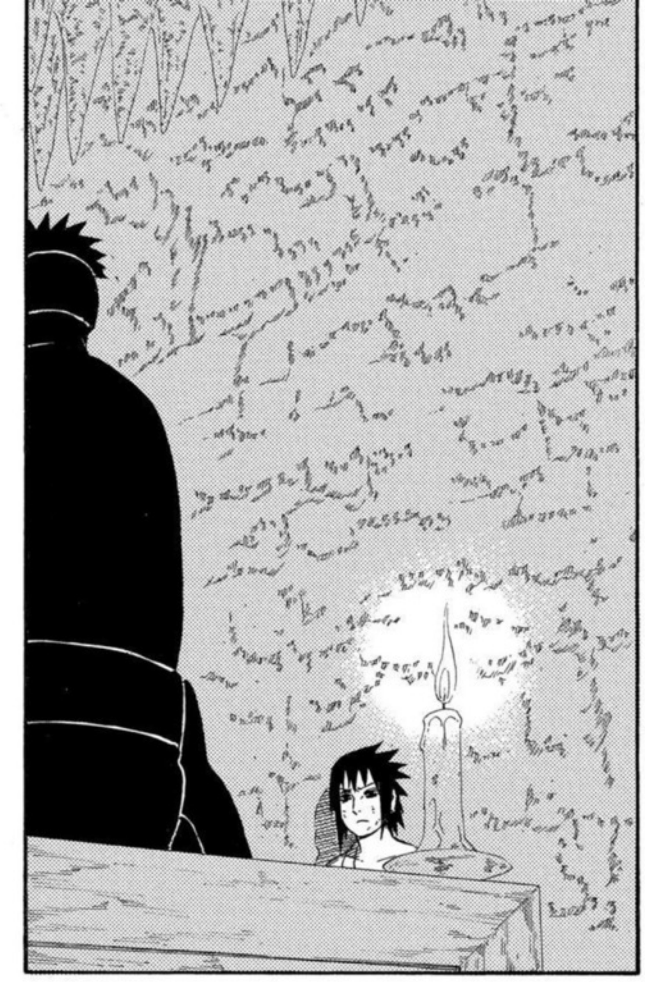

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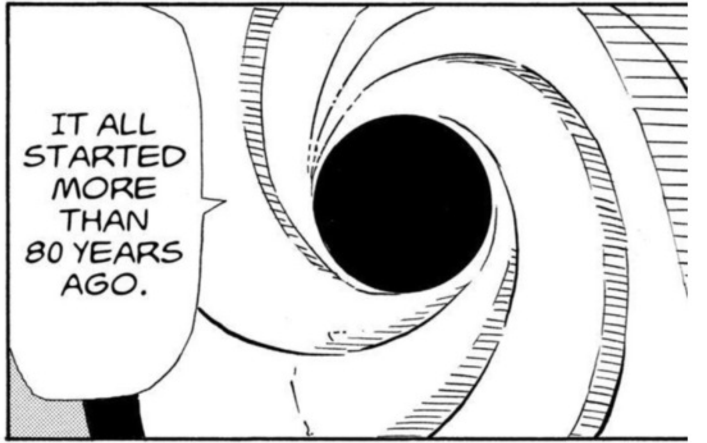


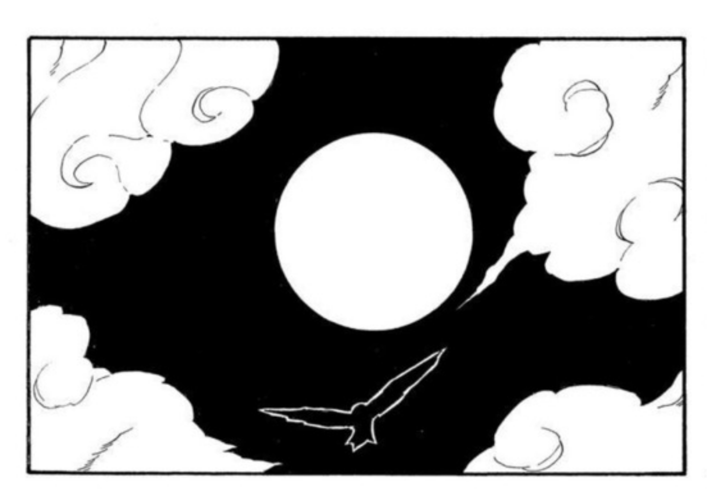



FINE...
TALK.


HEH...

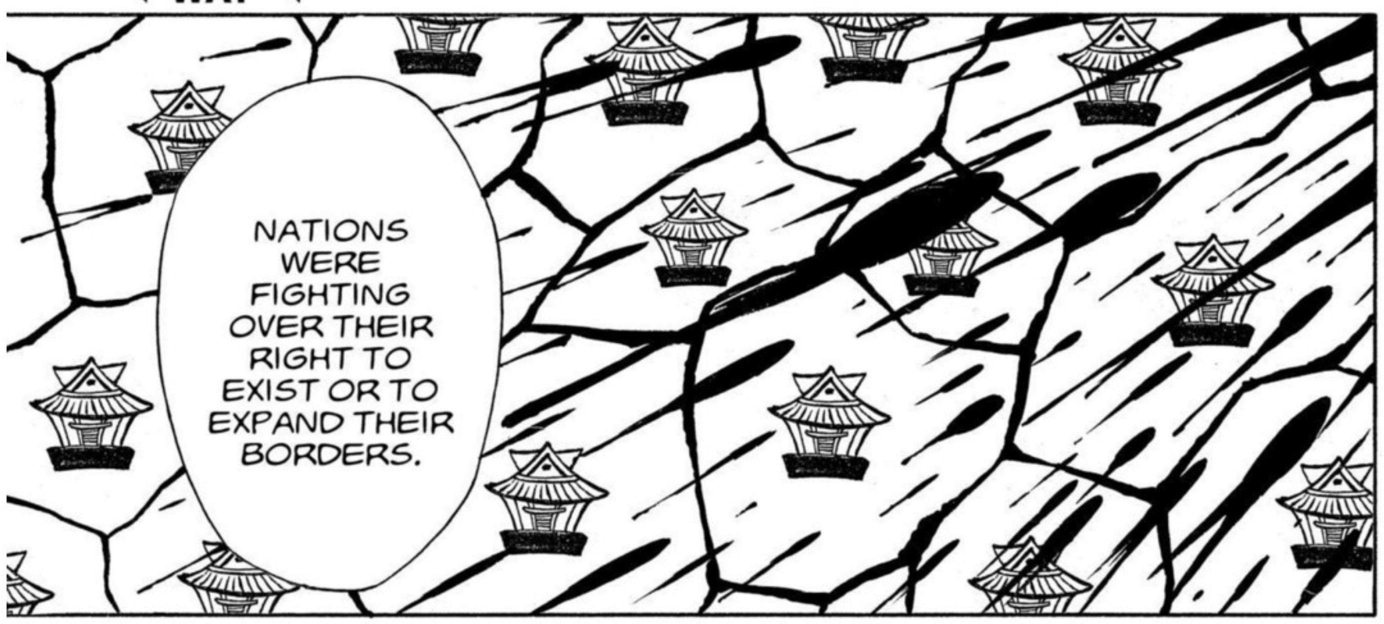


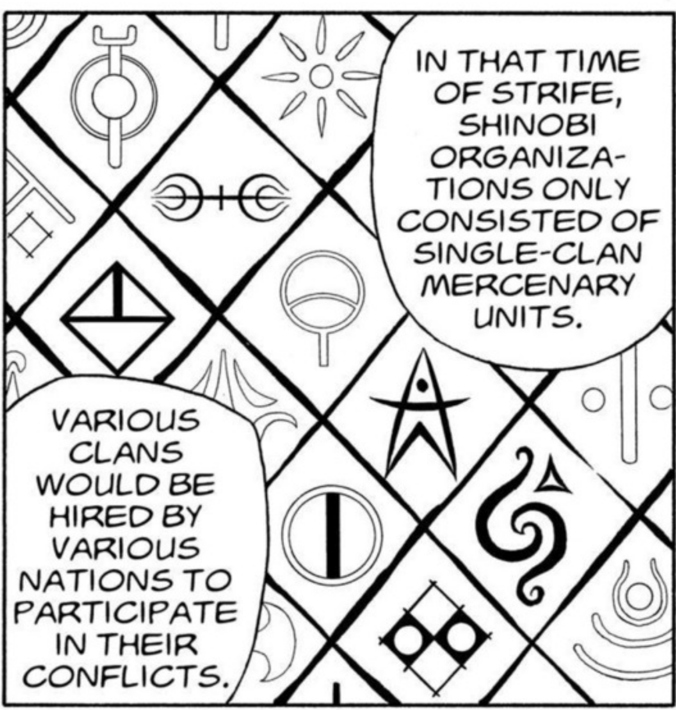

IT ALL STARTED MORE THAN 80 YEARS AGO.

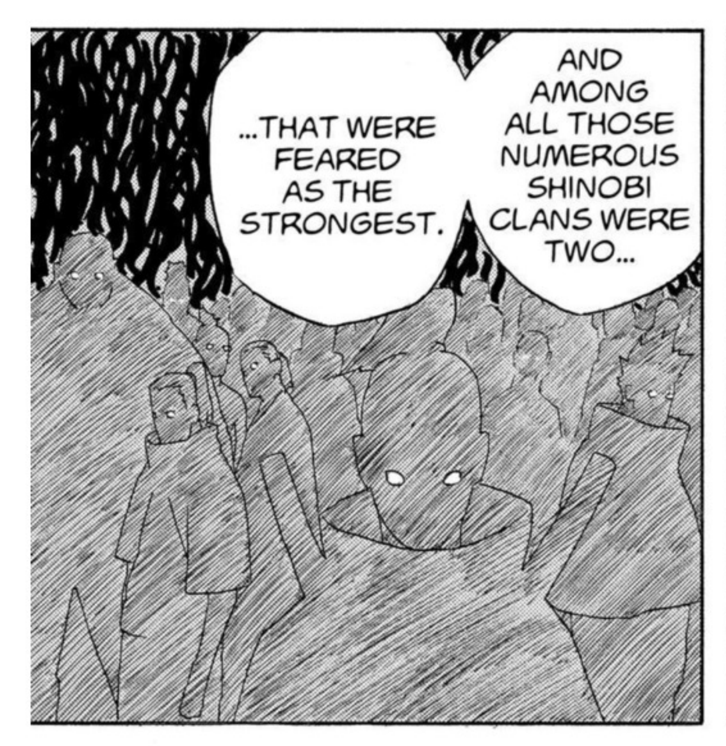



BACK THEN, THE WORLD WAS EMBROILED IN ENDLESS BATTLES, AN ERA OF WARRING STATES.

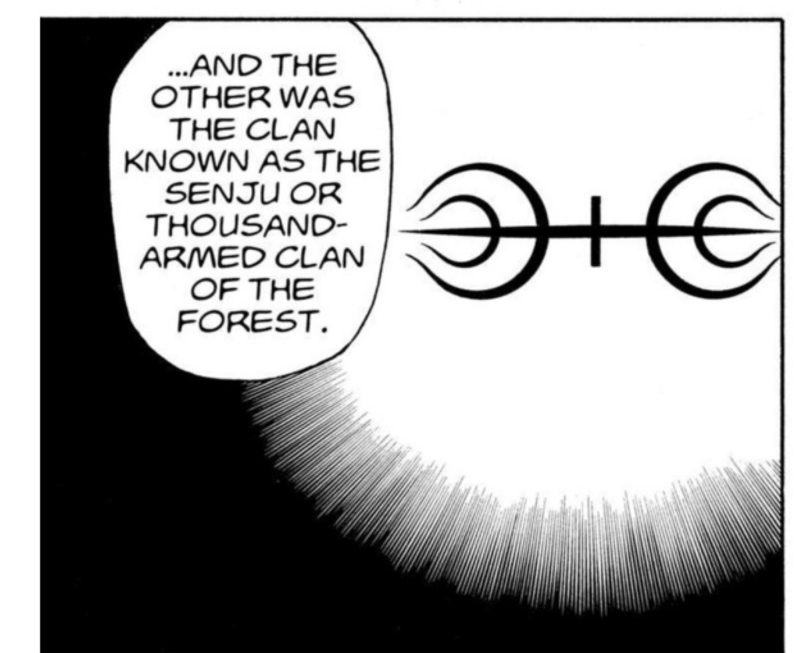

READ THIS WAY


NATIONS WERE FIGHTING OVER THEIR RIGHT TO EXIST OR TO EXPAND THEIR BORDERS.


IN THAT TIME OF STRIFE, SHINOBI ORGANIZATIONS ONLY CONSISTED OF SINGLE-CLAN MERCENARY UNITS.
VARIOUS CLANS WOULD BE HIRED BY VARIOUS NATIONS TO PARTICIPATE IN THEIR CONFLICTS.


AND AMONG ALL THOSE NUMEROUS SHINOBI CLANS WERE TWO...
...THAT WERE FEARED AS THE STRONGEST.


ONE WAS OUR OWN UCHIHA CLAN...


...AND THE OTHER WAS THE CLAN KNOWN AS THE SENJU OR THOUSAND-ARMED CLAN OF THE FOREST.


WE OF UCHIHA POSSESSED EXCEPTIONAL CHAKRA AND THE SHARINGAN.
EXCELLING IN ALL TYPES OF WARFARE, WE BECAME KNOWN AS A BATTLE CLAN.


AND THEN I WAS BORN...
...POSSESSING PARTICULARLY POWERFUL CHAKRA... EVEN FOR AN UCHIHA.


YOU COULD SAY THAT ME SURVIVING THIS LONG IS PROOF OF THAT.

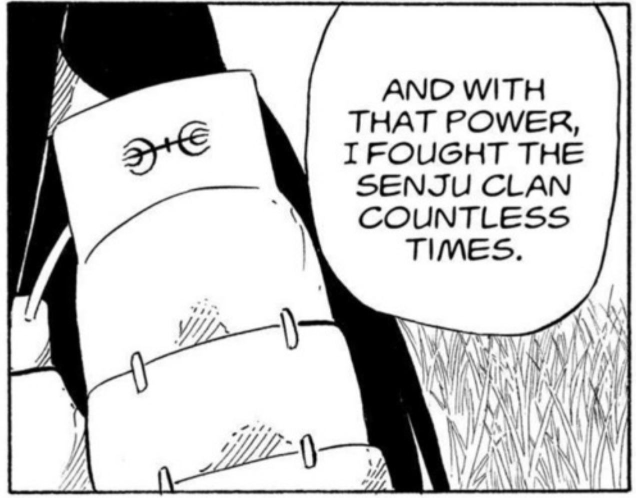

BACK THEN, I SPENT EVERY DAY ON THE BATTLEFIELD.

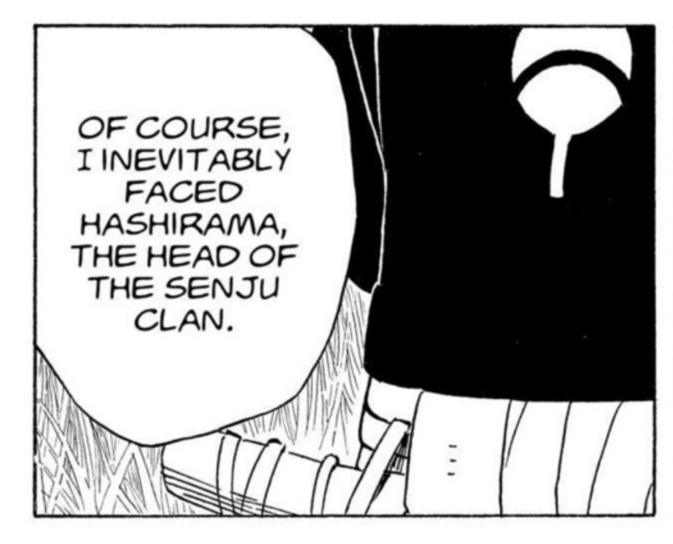

IN AN ERA WHERE POWER WAS EVERYTHING...
...AND AT THE COST OF MY FRIENDS AND YOUNGER BROTHER, I CONTINUOUSLY SOUGHT EVER MORE POWER.

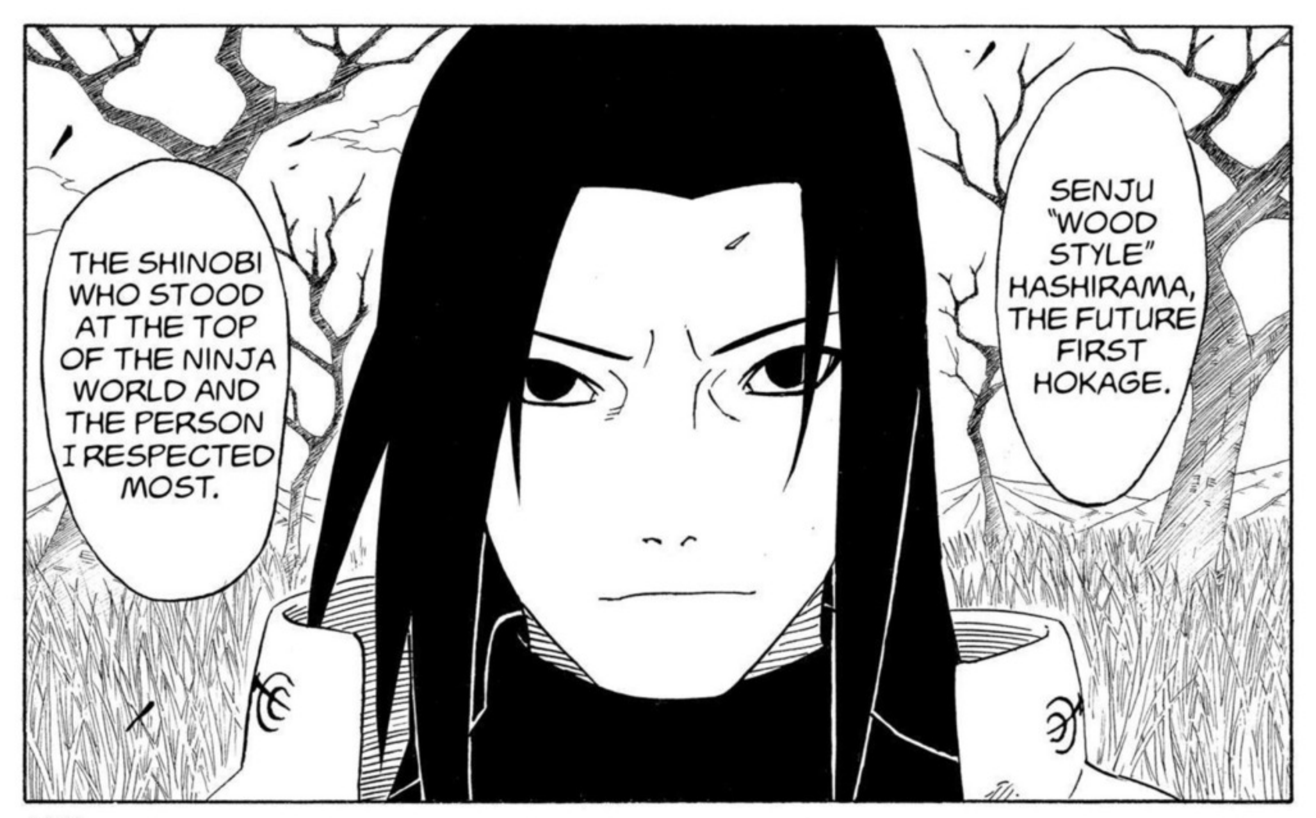

READ
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WAY


...
YOU...


BUT THANKS TO THAT, I WAS ABLE TO FULLY AWAKEN THE MANGEKYO SHARINGAN...
...AND BECOME UCHIHA'S LEADER.


AND WITH THAT POWER, I FOUGHT THE SENJU CLAN COUNTLESS TIMES.


OF COURSE, I INEVITABLY FACED HASHIRAMA, THE HEAD OF THE SENJU CLAN.


SENJU "WOOD STYLE" HASHIRAMA, THE FUTURE FIRST HOKAGE.
THE SHINOBI WHO STOOD AT THE TOP OF THE NINJA WORLD AND THE PERSON I RESPECTED MOST.


NARUTO

Number 399: How It All Begins!!

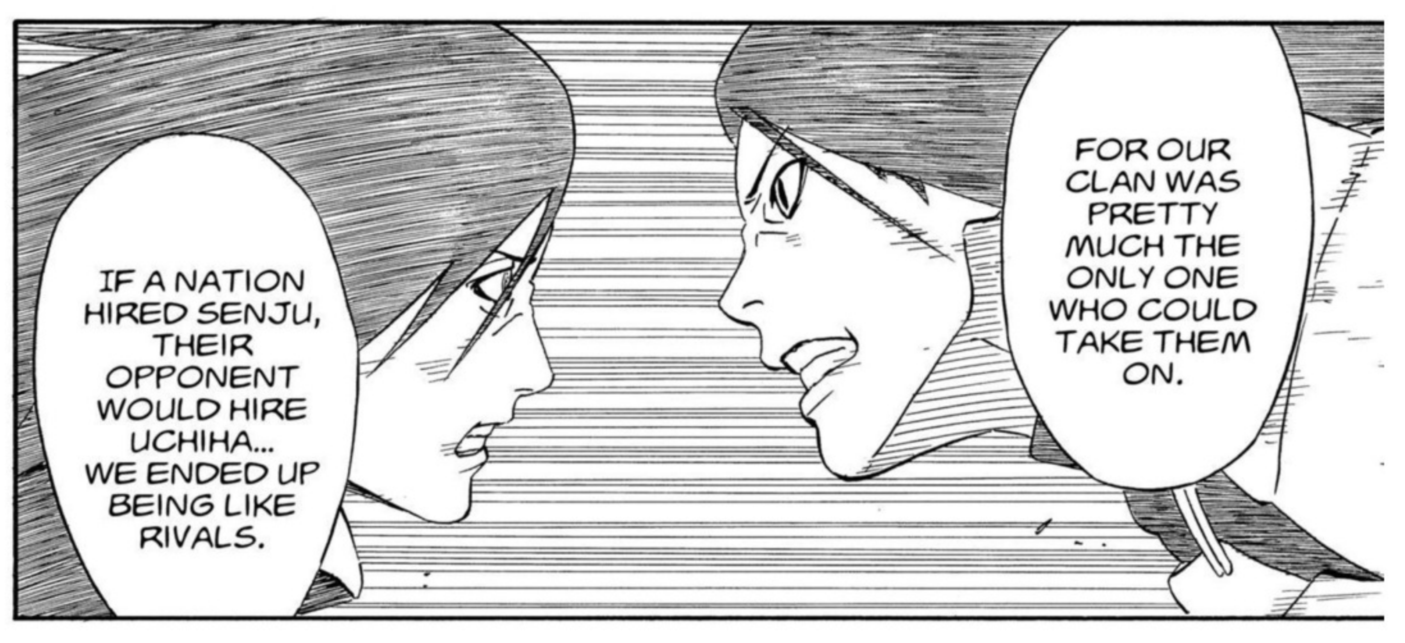
LED BY HASHIRAMA, WHO WOULD BECOME THE FIRST MAN...

...TO CLAIM THE TITLE **HOKAGE**, THE SENJU CLAN...

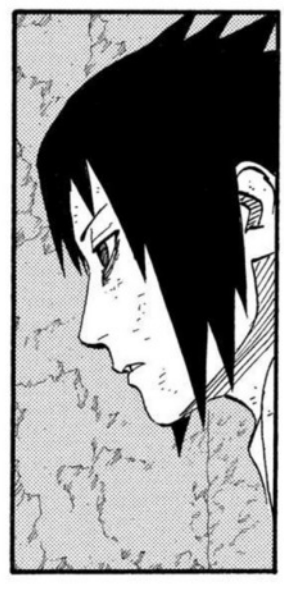
...WAS ACKNOWL-EDGED AS THE FIERCEST, AND THE MOST FEARED...

...BY EVERY OTHER SHINOBI CLAN.

WHENEVER SENJU MADE A MOVE, UCHIHA MOVED AS WELL.



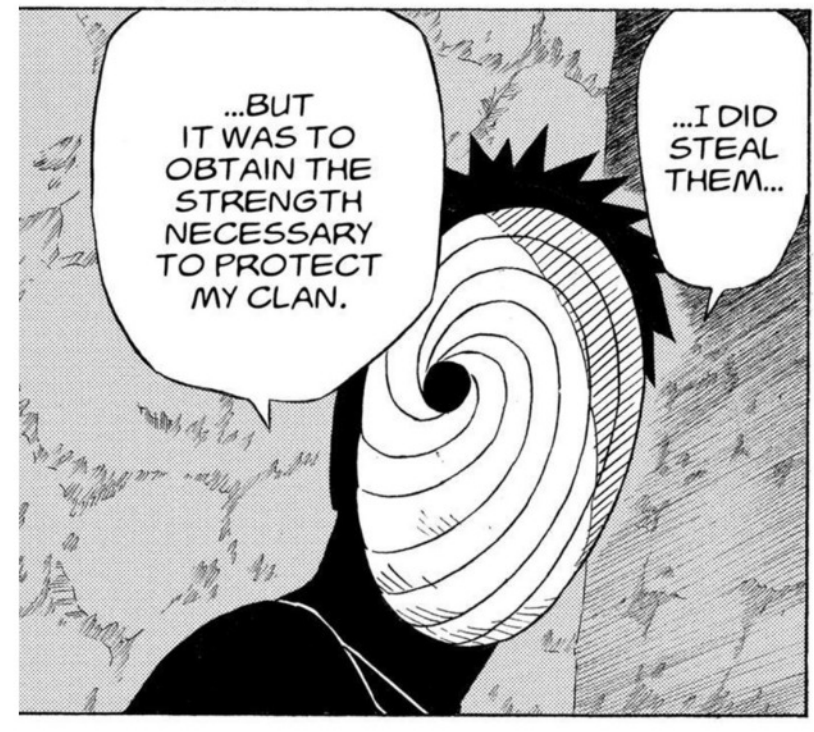




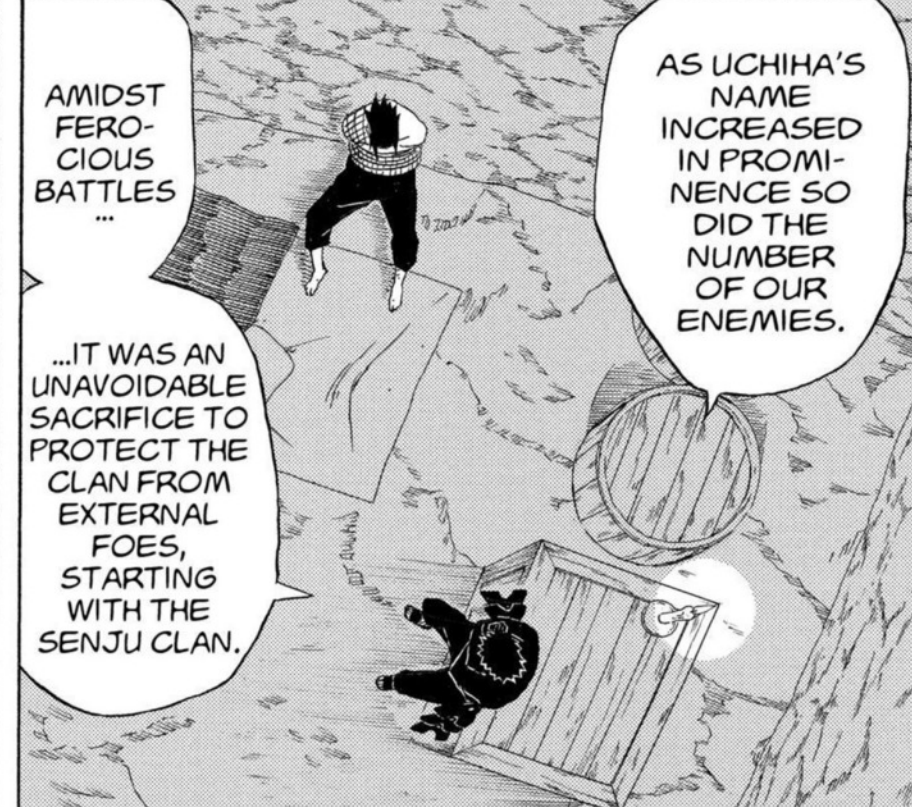



READ
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WAY


YOU STOLE YOUR BROTHER'S EYES...
...MERELY TO HEIGHTEN YOUR REPUTA-TION?!


...I DID STEAL THEM...
...BUT IT WAS TO OBTAIN THE STRENGTH NECESSARY TO PROTECT MY CLAN.


TO PROTECT YOUR CLAN?


AS UCHIHA'S NAME INCREASED IN PROMI-NENCE SO DID THE NUMBER OF OUR ENEMIES.
AMIDST FERO-CIOUS BATTLES ...
...IT WAS AN UNAVOIDABLE SACRIFICE TO PROTECT THE CLAN FROM EXTERNAL FOES, STARTING WITH THE SENJU CLAN.


IT WASN'T FOR SELFISH REASONS.


AND MY BROTHER WAS FULLY AWARE AND AGREED WITH IT.
IN FACT, HE VOLUNTEERED HIS EYES TO ME.


KANNCH


...

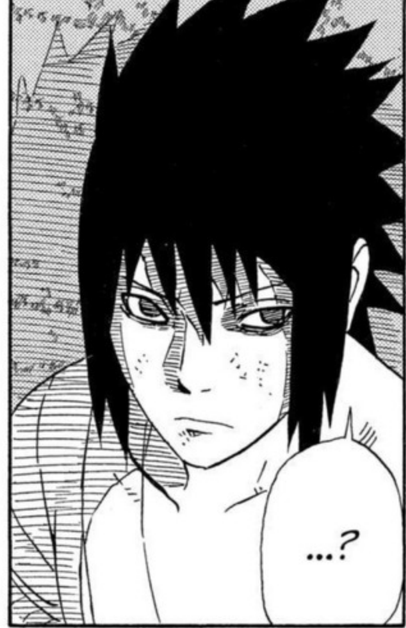

BUT THEN, ONE DAY...
...THE SENJU CLAN PROPOSED A CEASE-FIRE TO UCHIHA.

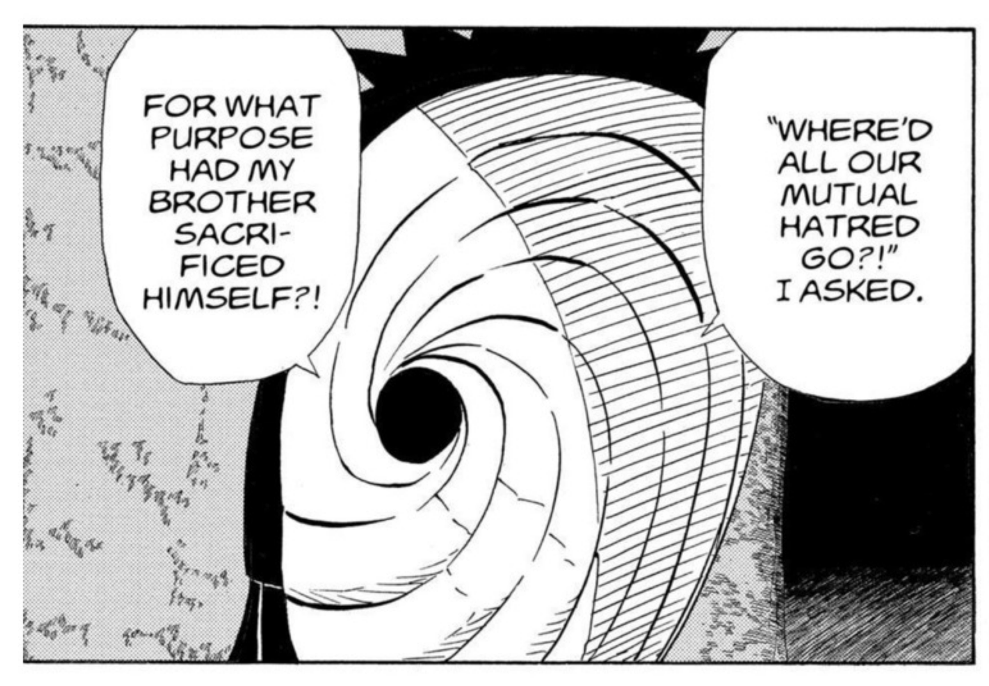

...AND UCHIHA CONCURRED.
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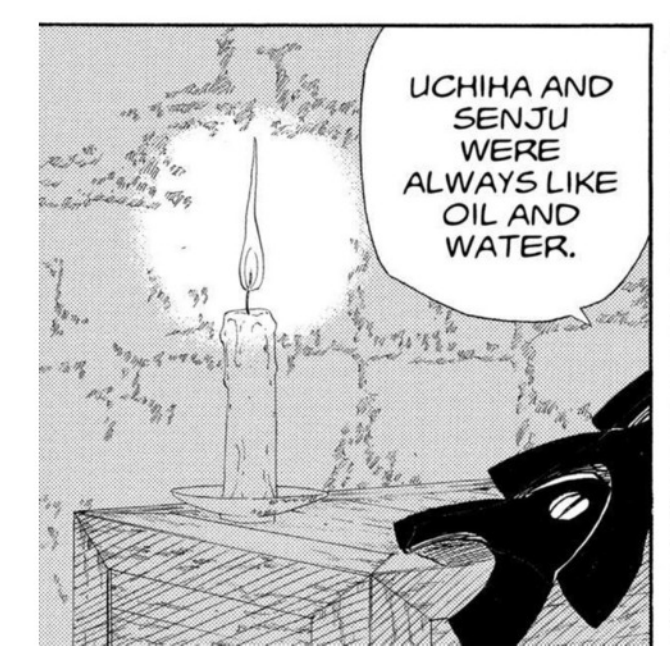

THE MAJORITY OF FOLKS ON BOTH SIDES WERE TIRED OF THE ENDLESS CONFLICT.
THEY'D REACHED THEIR LIMIT.


I WAS THE SOLE DISSENTER TO THE CEASE-FIRE.


...?

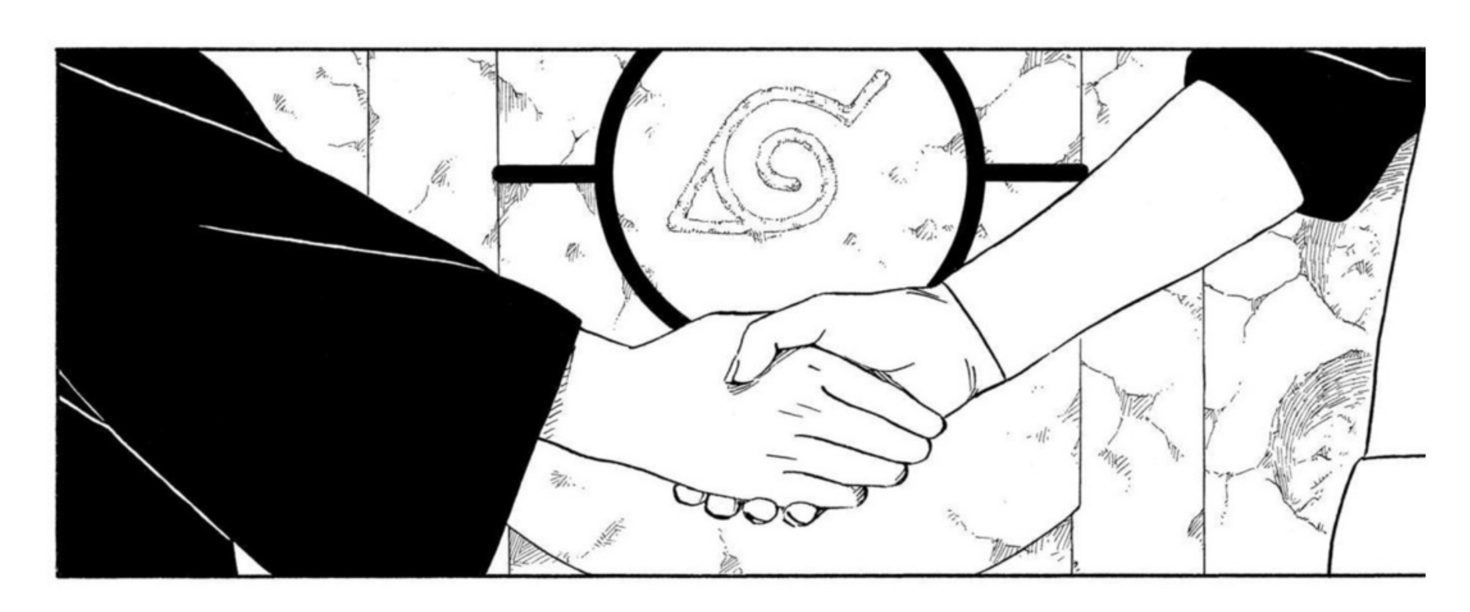

"WHERE'D ALL OUR MUTUAL HATRED GO?!" I ASKED.
FOR WHAT PURPOSE HAD MY BROTHER SACRI-FICED HIMSELF?!



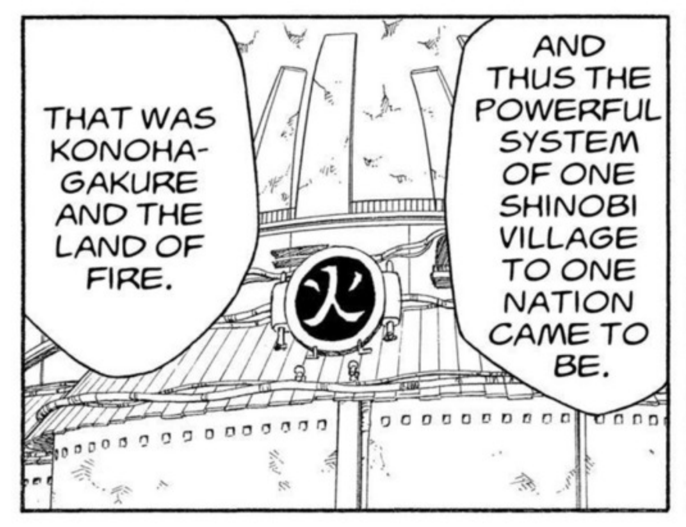

UCHIHA AND SENJU WERE ALWAYS LIKE OIL AND WATER.


I COULDN'T HELP FEARING THAT THE UCHIHA CLAN WOULD ONE DAY...
...COME TO BE OP-PRESSED BY THE SENJU CLAN.

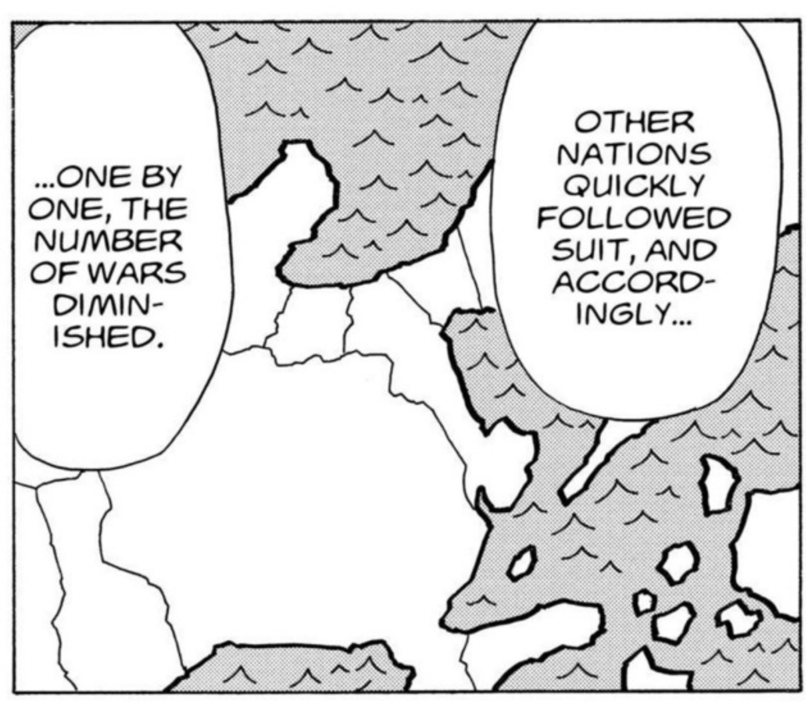

HOWEVER... THE REST OF MY CLAN DESPER-ATELY DESIRED PEACE.
SO AS THEIR COLLECTIVE LEADER, I ACCEDED TO THEIR WILL.



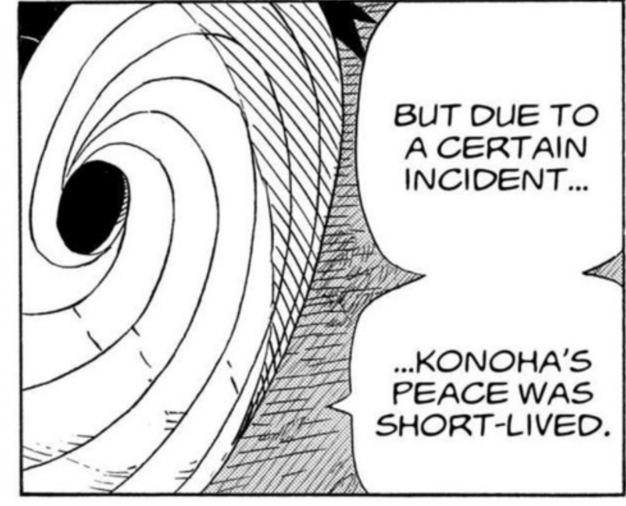

IT WASN'T TOO LONG AFTERWARD THAT OUR ALLIANCE...
...FORGED AN AGREEMENT WITH THE LAND OF FIRE, WHICH WANTED TO STABILIZE ITS BORDERS.

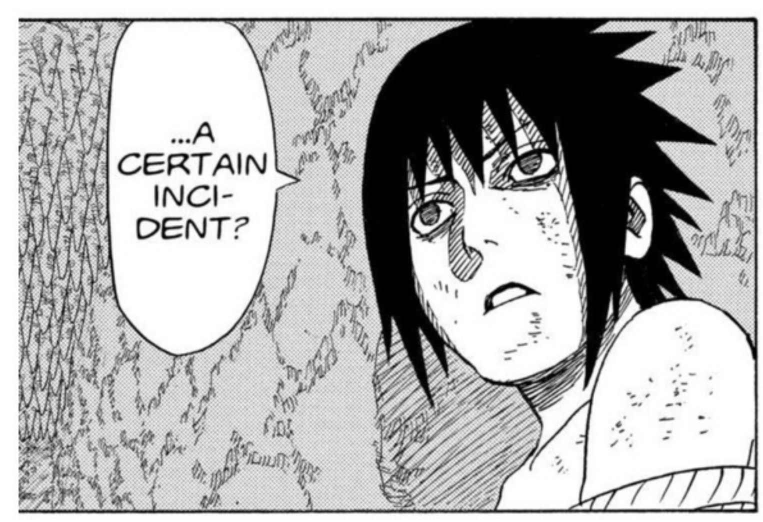

AND THUS THE POWERFUL SYSTEM OF ONE SHINOBI VILLAGE TO ONE NATION CAME TO BE.
THAT WAS KONOHA-GAKURE AND THE LAND OF FIRE.

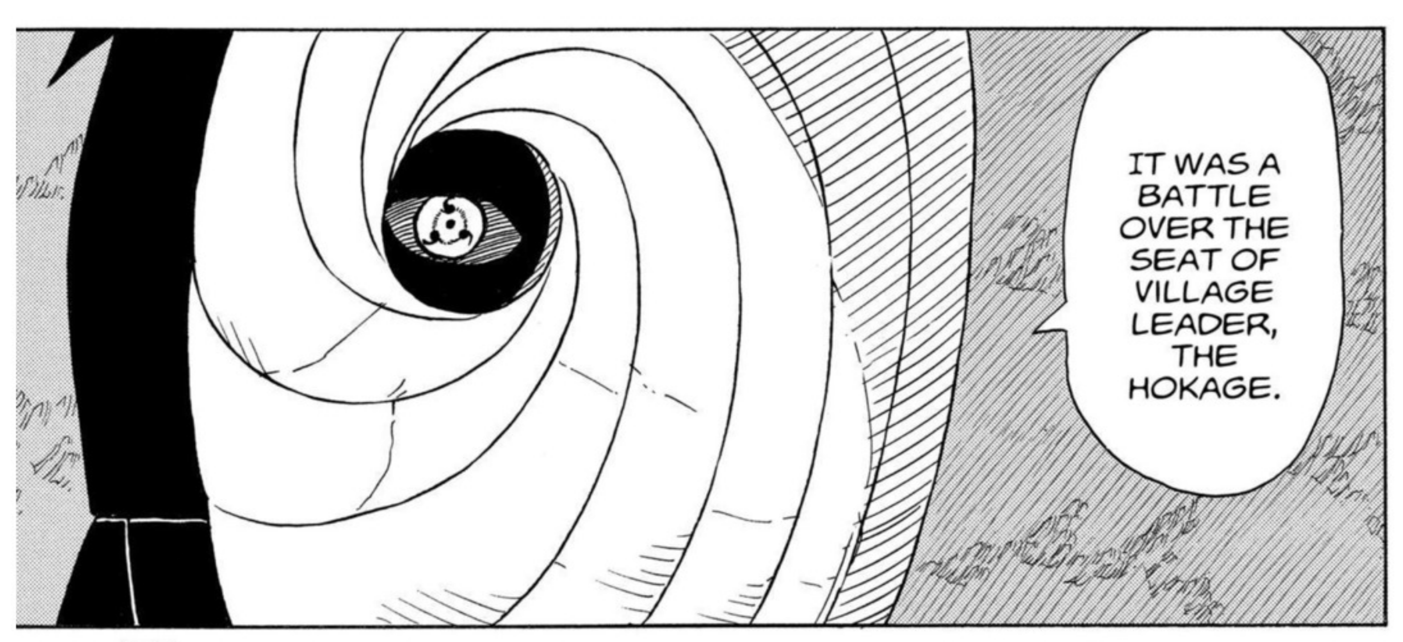

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OTHER NATIONS QUICKLY FOLLOWED SUIT, AND ACCORDINGLY...
...ONE BY ONE, THE NUMBER OF WARS DIMINISHED.


INSTANTANEOUS PEACE.

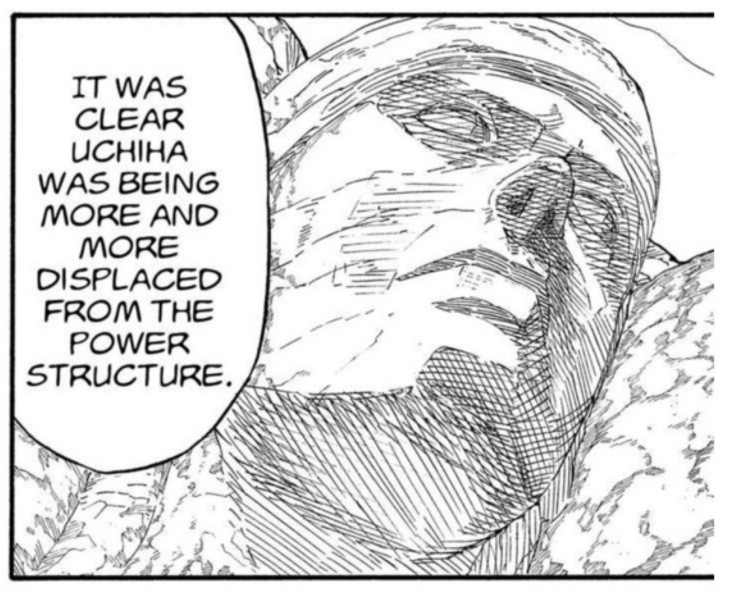

BUT DUE TO A CERTAIN INCIDENT...
...KONOHA'S PEACE WAS SHORT-LIVED.


...A CERTAIN INCIDENT?


IT WAS A BATTLE OVER THE SEAT OF VILLAGE LEADER, THE HOKAGE.

AS YOU ALREADY KNOW, SENJU HASHIRAMA ATTAINED THAT POSITION.

BOTH THE VILLAGE AND LAND OF FIRE SELECTED HASHIRAMA.



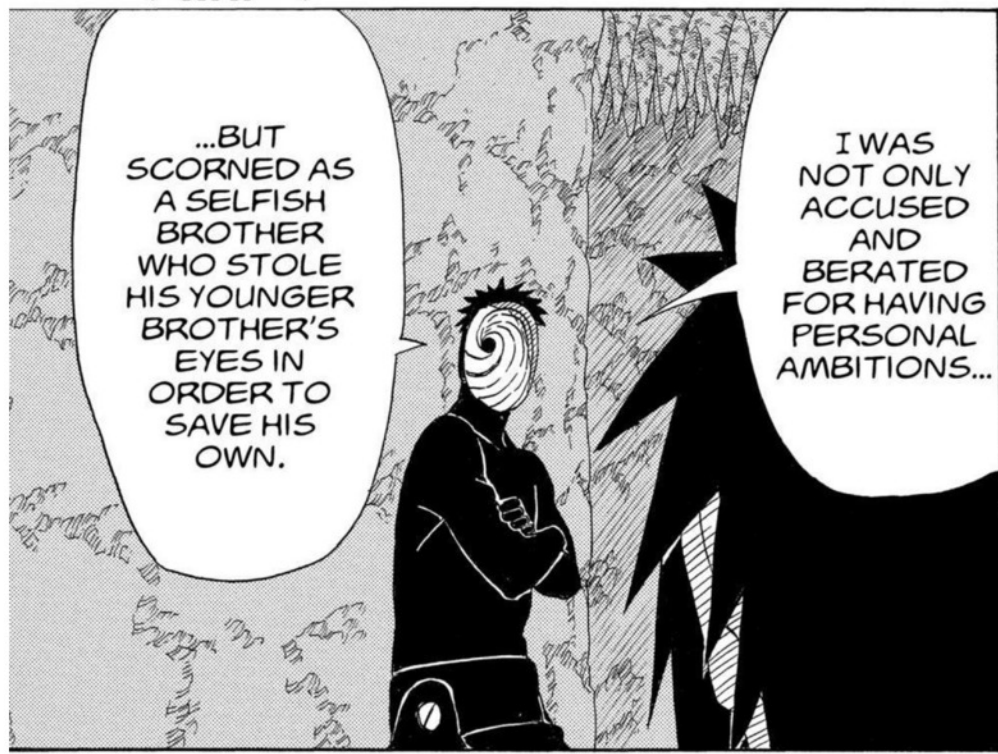


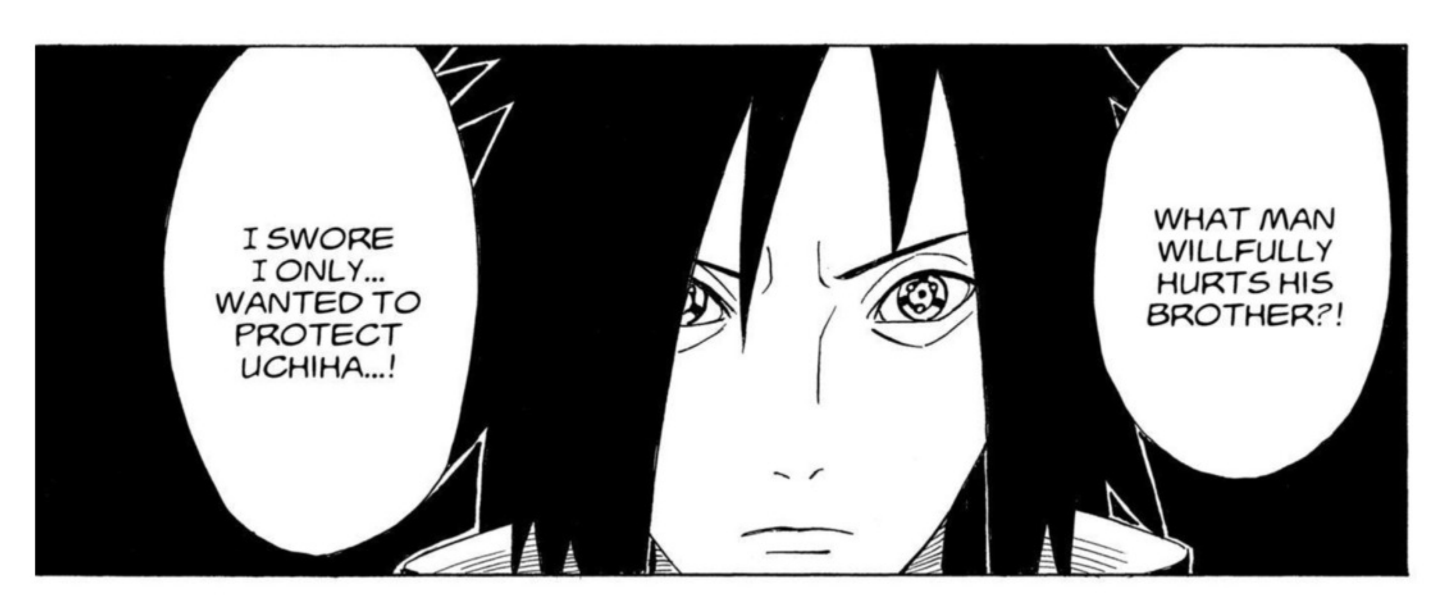





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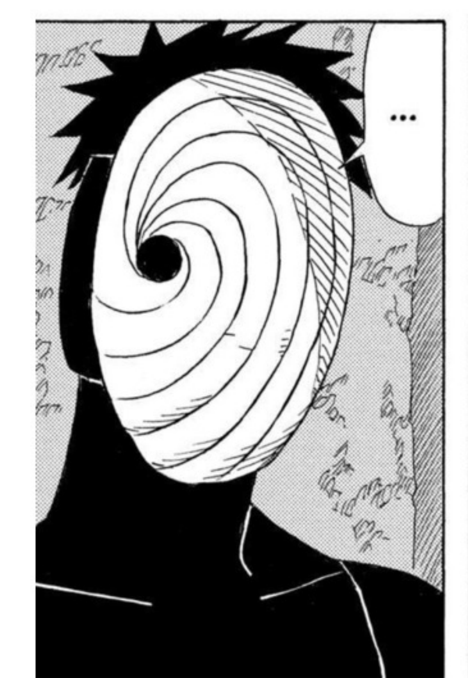

...


I WAS NOT ONLY ACCUSED AND BERATED FOR HAVING PERSONAL AMBITIONS...
...BUT SCORNED AS A SELFISH BROTHER WHO STOLE HIS YOUNGER BROTHER'S EYES IN ORDER TO SAVE HIS OWN.


WHAT MAN WILLFULLY HURTS HIS BROTHER?!
I SWORE I ONLY... WANTED TO PROTECT UCHIHA...!




I LEFT KONOHA.
HAVING BEEN BETRAYED BY ALL.


...

I RETURNED AS AN AVENGER, AND DECLARED WAR ON KONOHA-GAKURE.

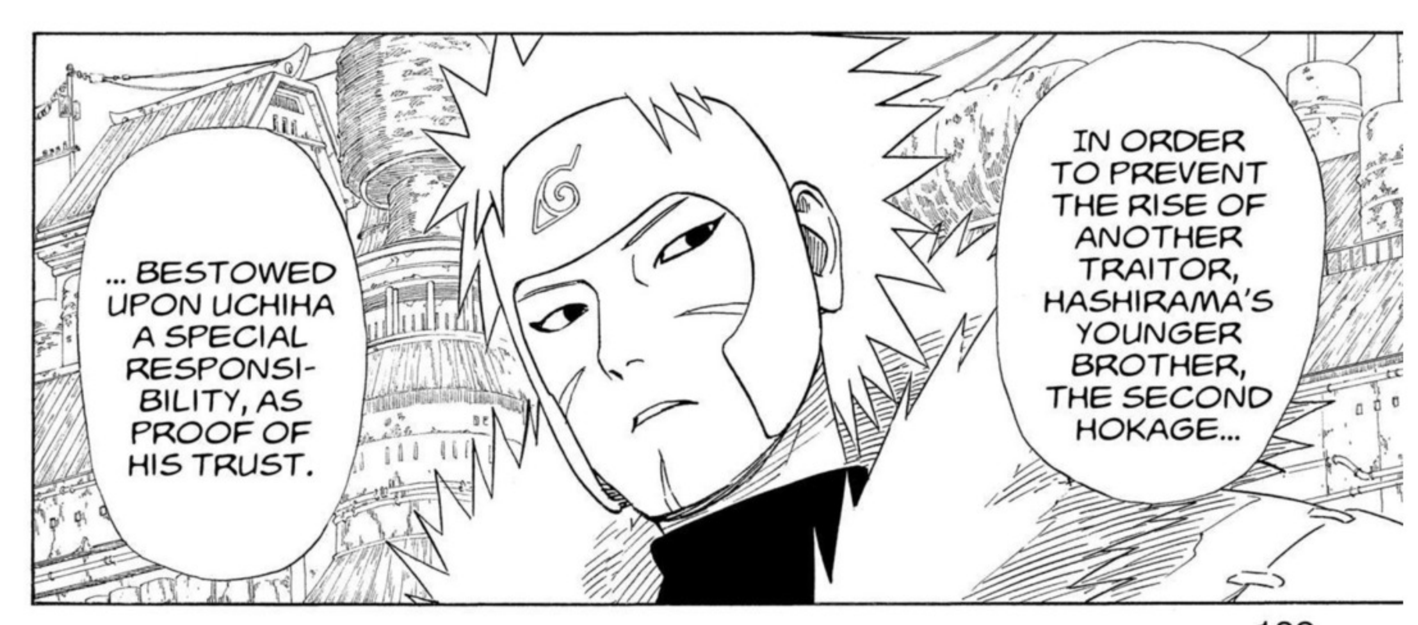




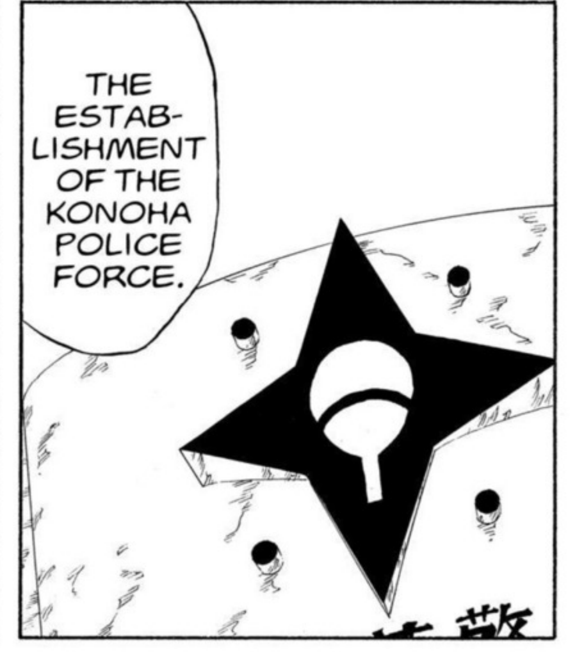
I WAS DEFEATED...
...AT THE SPOT THAT HAS COME TO BE KNOWN AS THE FINAL VALLEY.

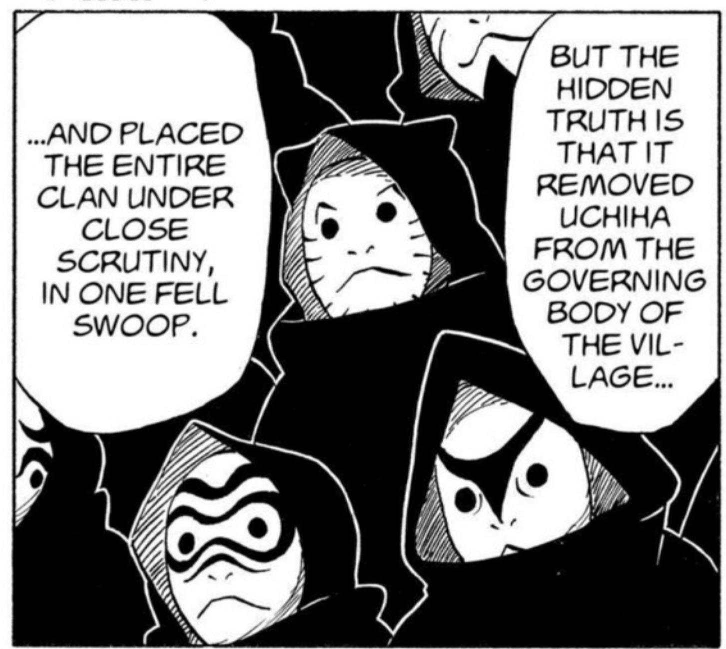






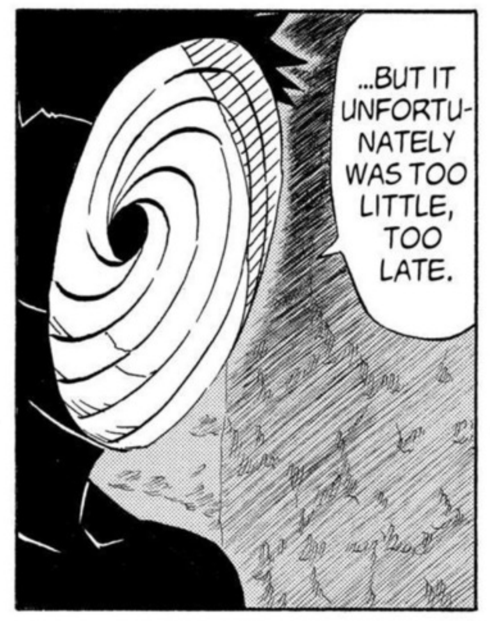

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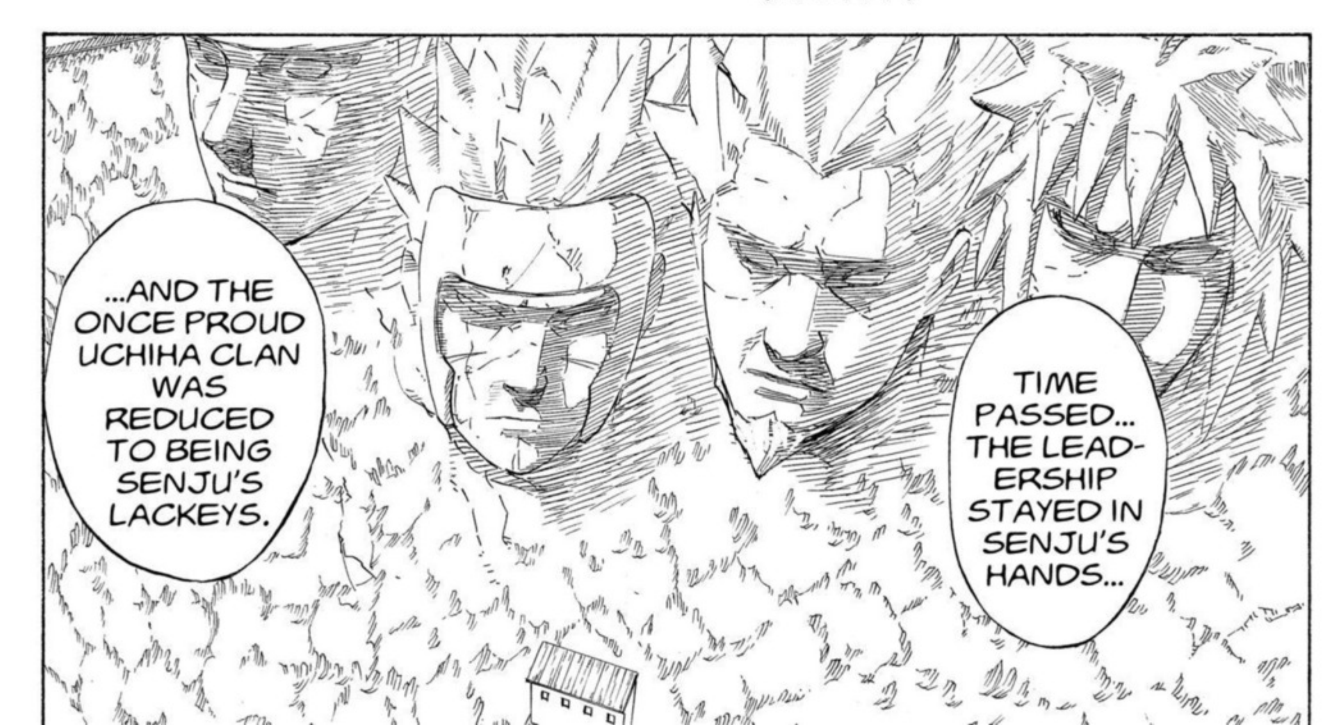

THE ESTAB-LISHMENT OF THE KONOHA POLICE FORCE.


BUT THE HIDDEN TRUTH IS THAT IT REMOVED UCHIHA FROM THE GOVERNING BODY OF THE VIL-LAGE...
...AND PLACED THE ENTIRE CLAN UNDER CLOSE SCRUTINY, IN ONE FELL SWOOP.

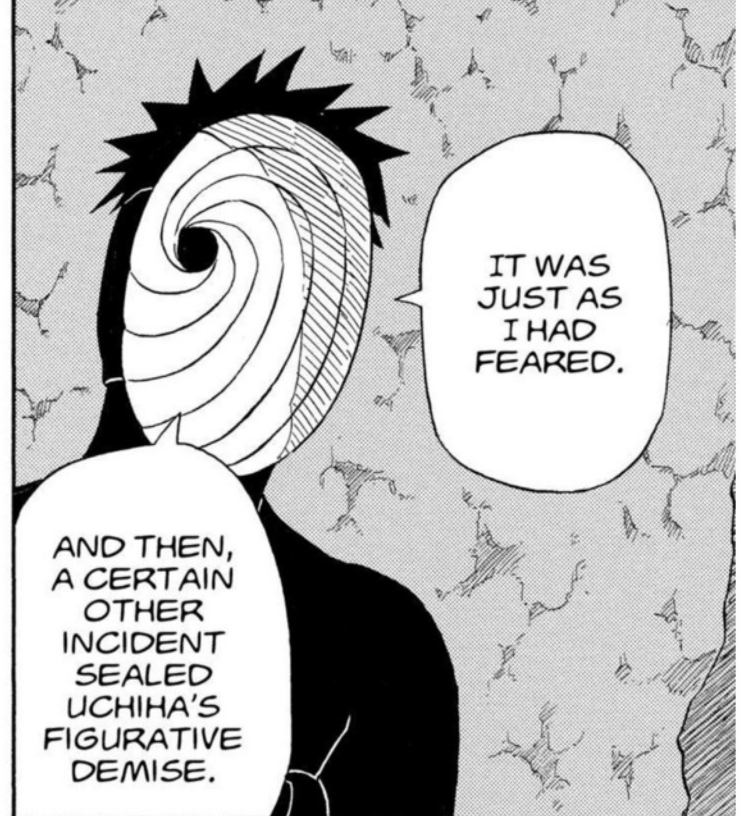

THERE WERE FINALLY SOME UCHIHA WHO DISCERNED THAT MOTIVE.
AND AN ANTI-ESTAB-LISHMENT FACTION THAT HAD INHERITED MY WILL.

(MADARA)


...BUT IT UNFORTU-NATELY WAS TOO LITTLE, TOO LATE.


TIME PASSED... THE LEAD-ERSHIP STAYED IN SENJU'S HANDS...
...AND THE ONCE PROUD UCHIHA CLAN WAS REDUCED TO BEING SENJU'S LACKEYS.

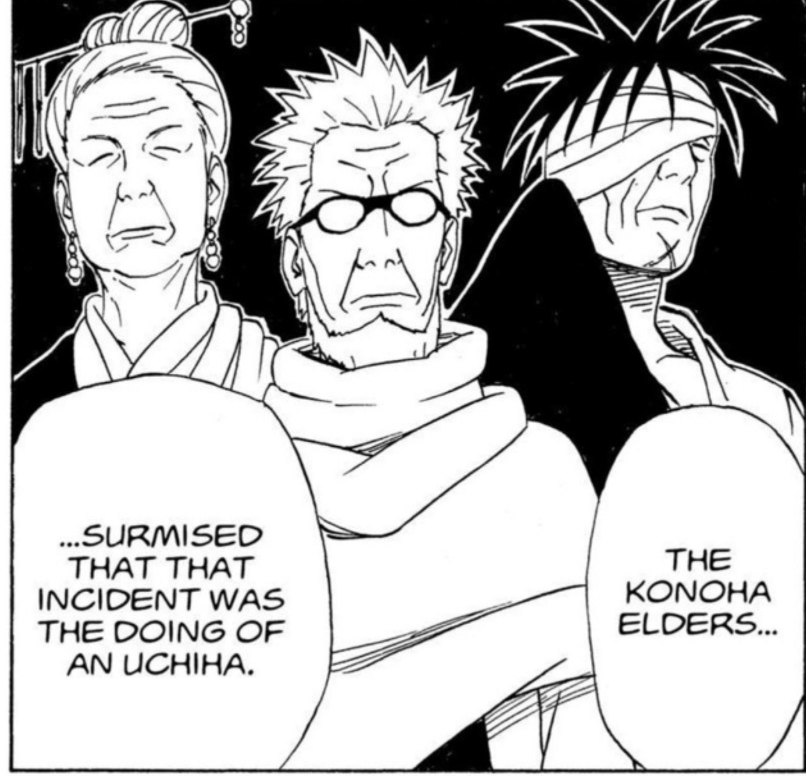




THE RE-APPEARANCE OF THE NINE-TAILED FOX SPIRIT 16 YEARS AGO.


WHAT DO YOU MEAN?

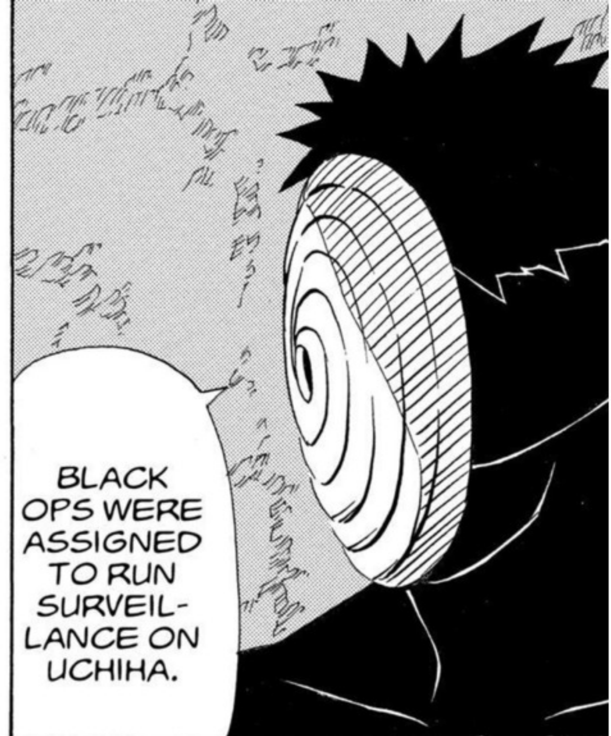

ONLY UCHIHA OCULAR POWERS CAN TAME AND CONTROL NINE TAILS...


THE KONOHA ELDERS...
...SURMISED THAT THAT INCIDENT WAS THE DOING OF AN UCHIHA.

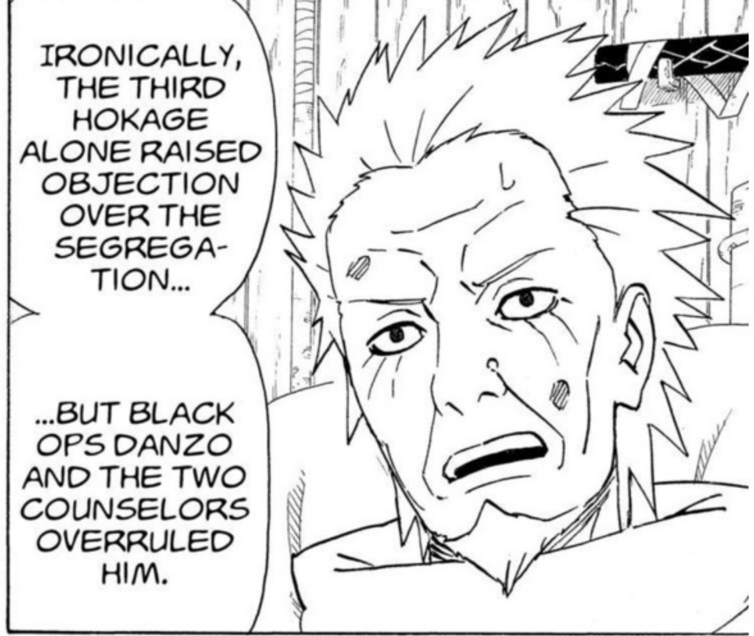

BUT IT WAS A SPONTANEOUSLY GENERATED NATURAL DISASTER.
COMPLETELY UNRELATED TO UCHIHA.


AND YET, UNJUST SUSPICIONS PERSISTED.
THAT UCHIHA WAS TRYING TO RAISE AN INSURRECTION TO TAKE OVER THE LEADERSHIP...

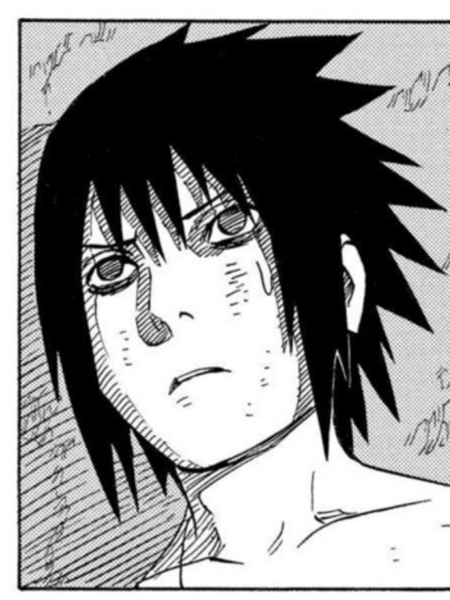

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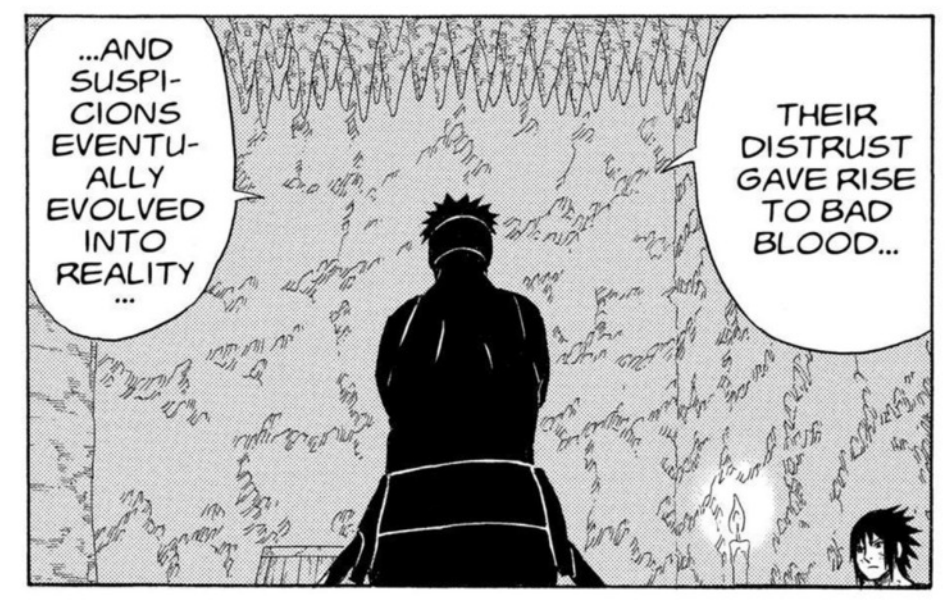

BLACK OPS WERE ASSIGNED TO RUN SURVEIL-LANCE ON UCHIHA.

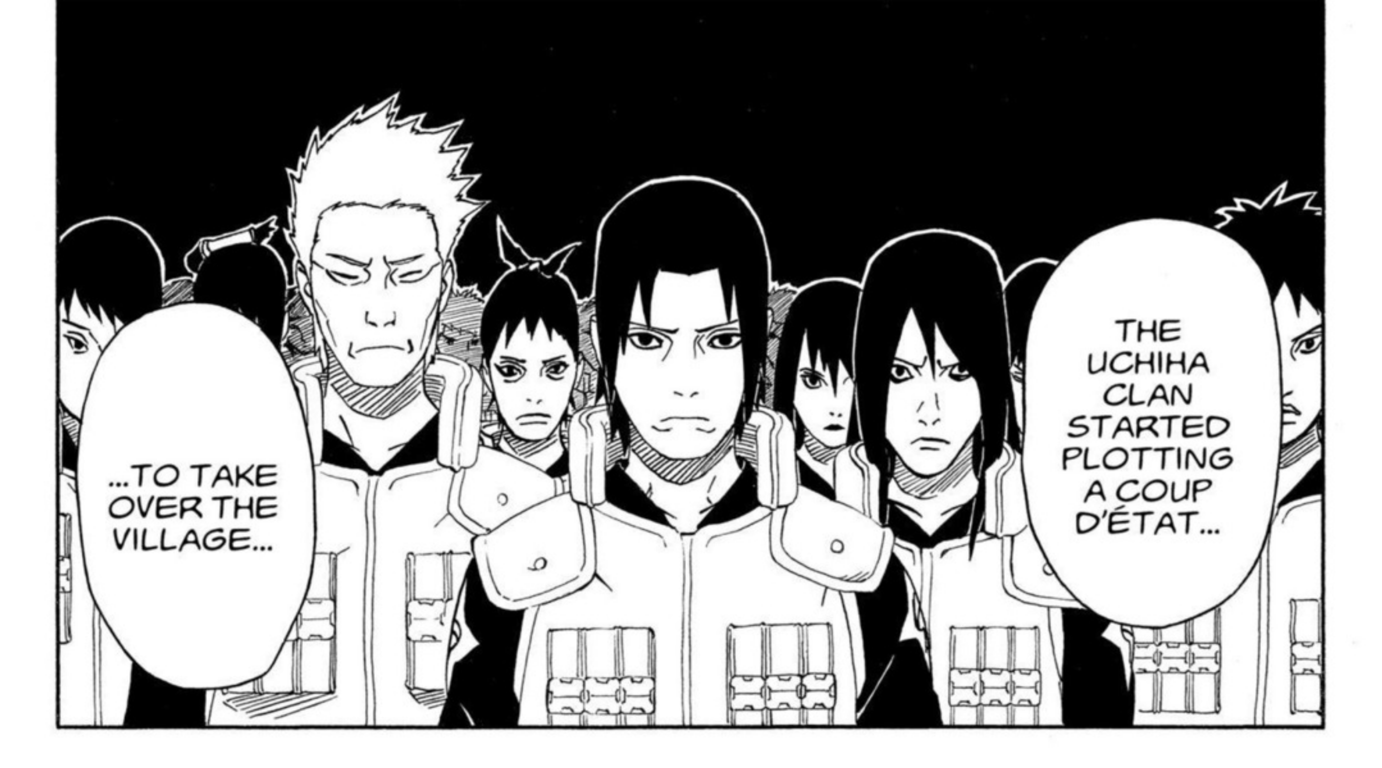

AND THE CLAN'S LIVING QUARTERS WERE RELOCATED TO ONE CORNER OF THE VIL-LAGE...
IT WAS AN ISOLATION TACTIC.


IRONICALLY, THE THIRD HOKAGE ALONE RAISED OBJECTION OVER THE SEGREGA-TION...
...BUT BLACK OPS DANZO AND THE TWO COUNSELORS OVERRULED HIM.


THE UCHIHA CLAN WAS SIMPLY NOT TRUSTED.
THAT WAS THE BEGIN-NING OF DISCRIM-INATION AGAINST US.

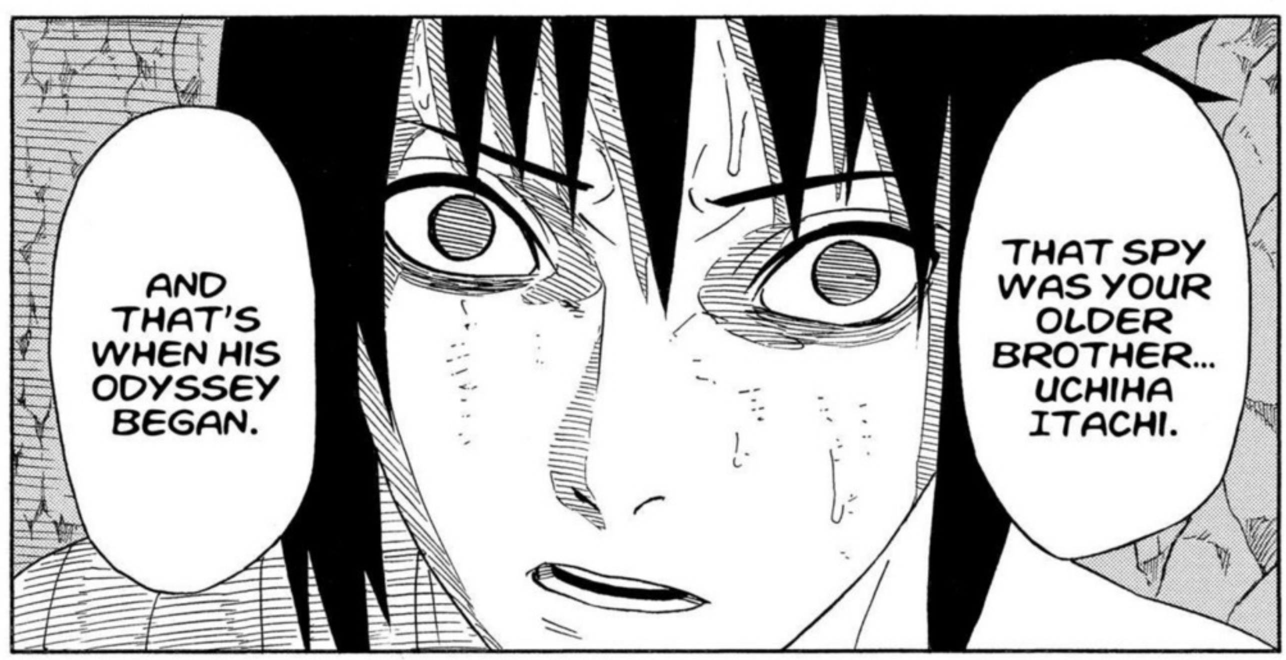



THEIR DISTRUST GAVE RISE TO BAD BLOOD...
...AND SUSPI-CIONS EVENTU-ALLY EVOLVED INTO REALITY ...


THE UCHIHA CLAN STARTED PLOTTING A COUP D'ÉTAT...
...TO TAKE OVER THE VILLAGE...

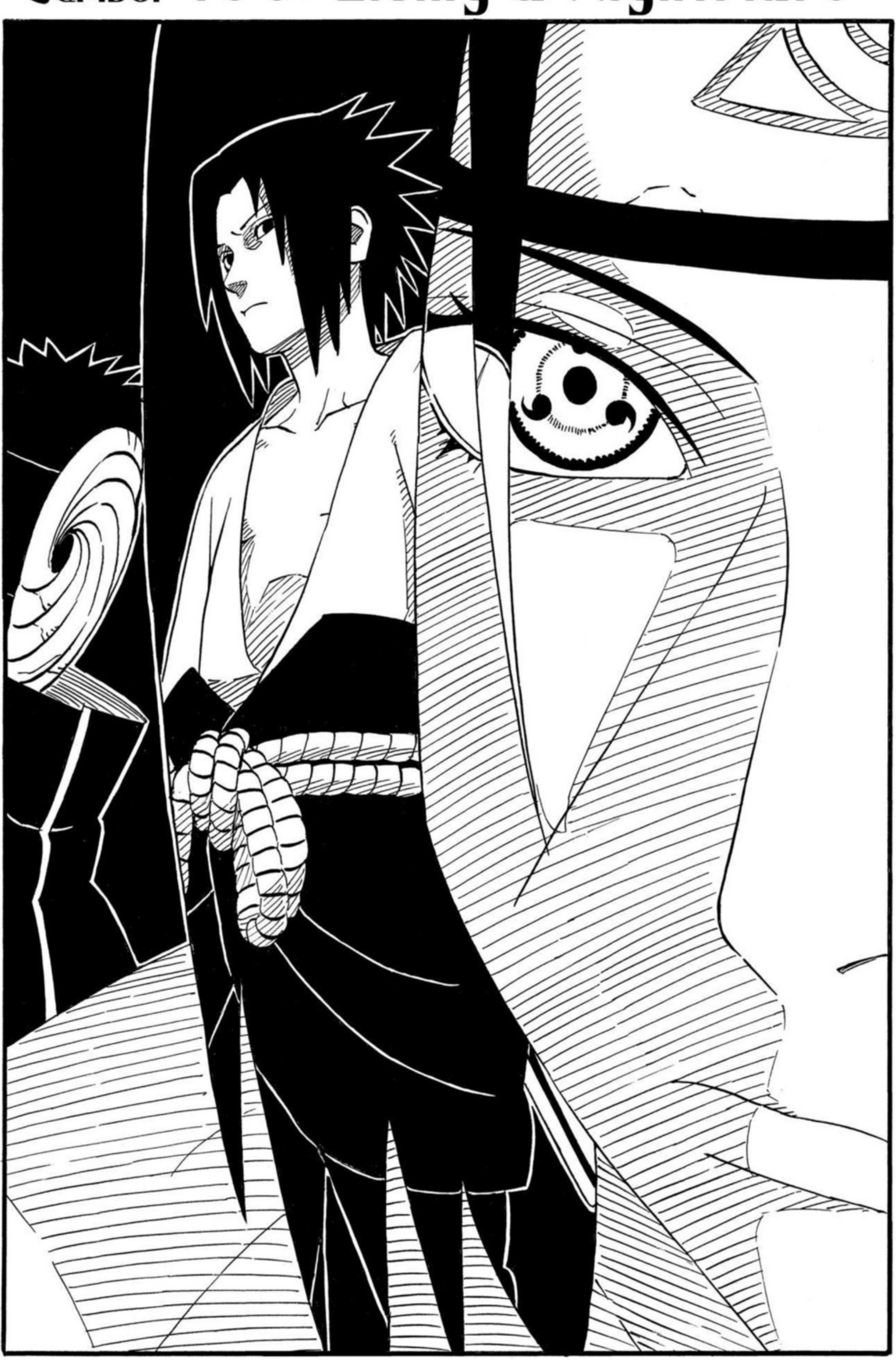

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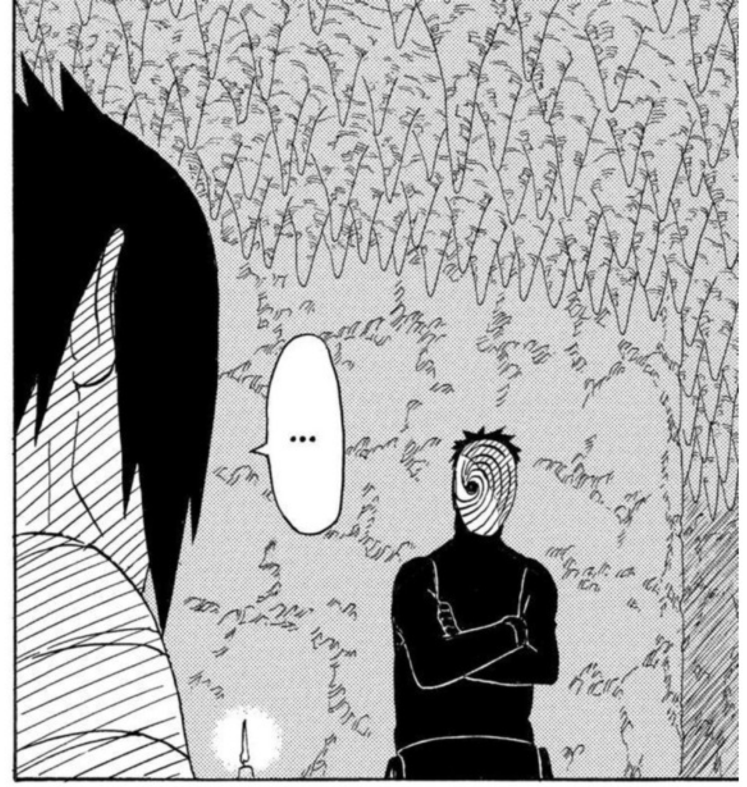

AND SO KONOHA'S LEADERS SENT IN A SPY TO WATCH THE UCHIHA CLAN.


THAT SPY WAS YOUR OLDER BROTHER... UCHIHA ITACHI.
AND THAT'S WHEN HIS ODYSSEY BEGAN.


NARUTO

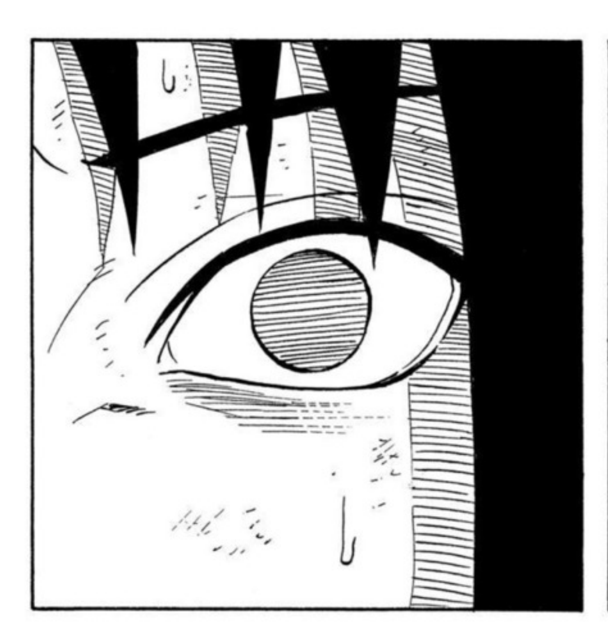
Number 400: Living a Nightmare

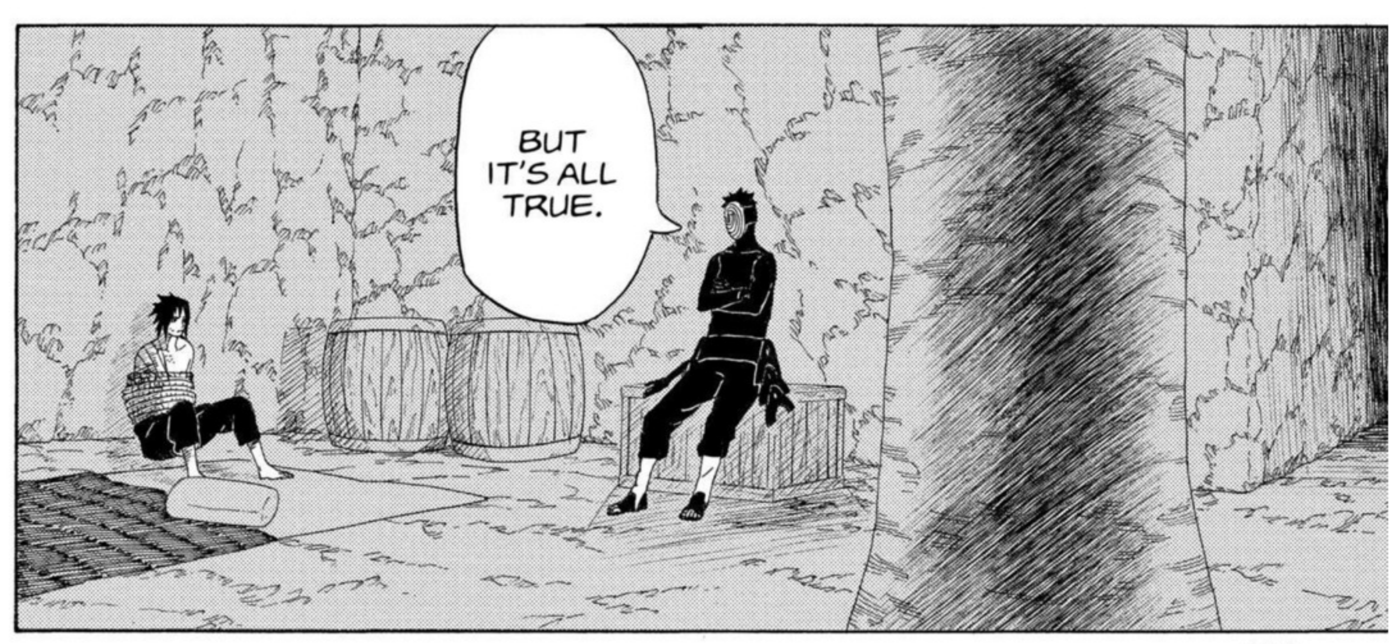


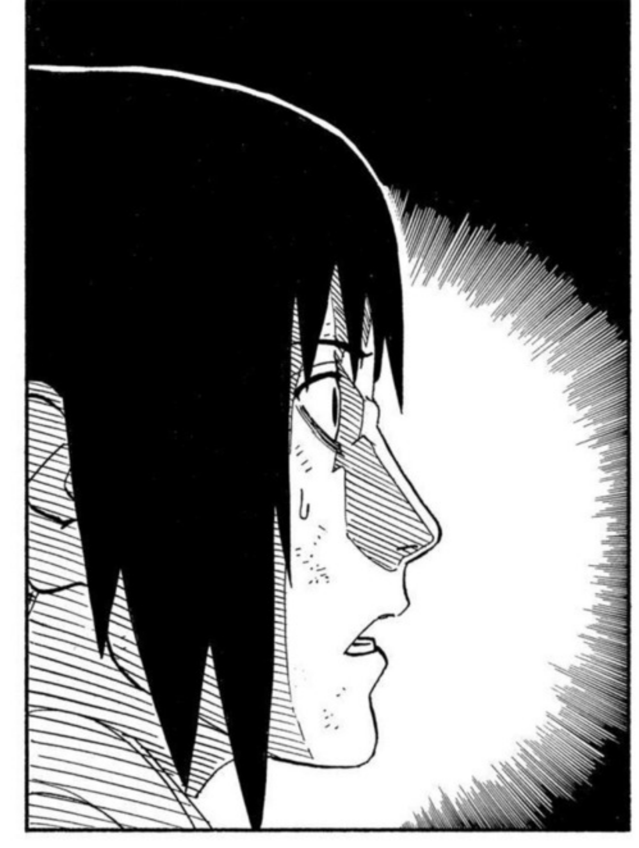

...


AN UCHIHA COUP...?
AND ITACHI... A SPY?

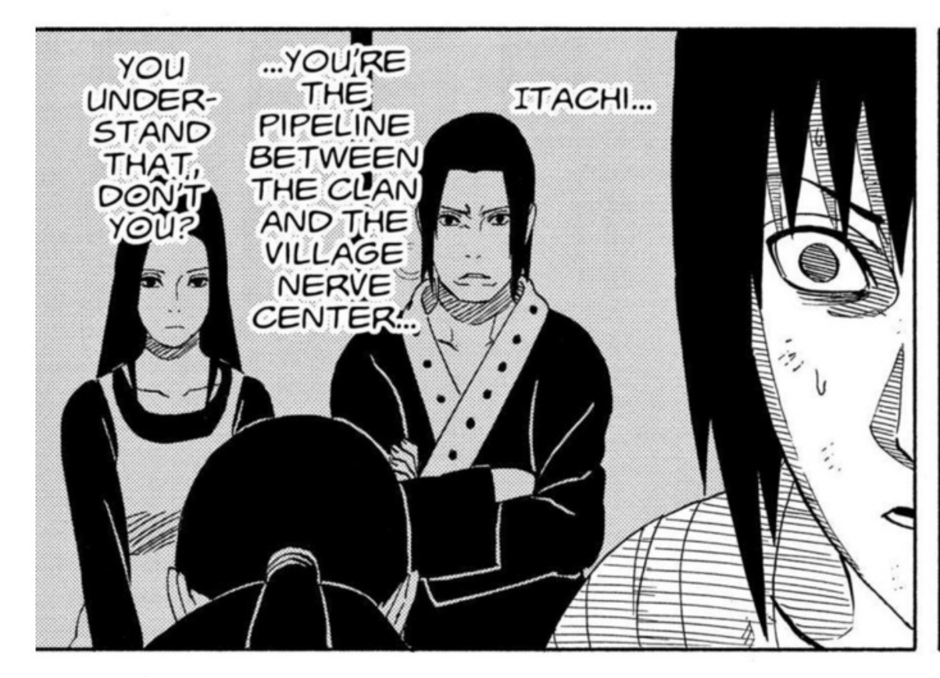

YOU MAY HAVE BEEN BROUGHT UP BY UCHIHA, BUT YOU WERE TOLD NOTHING.
BECAUSE YOU WERE SO YOUNG.




BUT IT'S ALL TRUE.




IN FACT, YOUR FATHER FUGAKU WAS THE MASTERMIND OF THAT ANTICIPATED COUP.


YOU UNDER-STAND THAT, DON'T YOU?
...YOU'RE THE PIPELINE BETWEEN THE CLAN AND THE VILLAGE NERVE CENTER...
ITACHI...


AND ITACHI WAS A SPY WHO ENTERED THE BLACK OPS ON YOUR FATHER'S ORDERS.

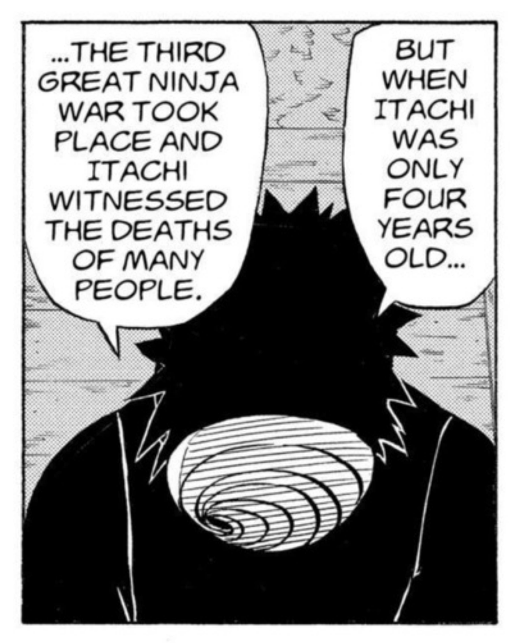

HOW-EVER... IT WAS ACTUALLY THE OP-POSITE.
ITACHI WAS SUPPLYING THE VILLAGE WITH INTELLI-GENCE ON UCHIHA.
IN OTHER WORDS, HE WAS A DOUBLE AGENT.


YOU CAN'T EVEN IMAGINE...
...WHAT A HEAVY BURDEN THAT IS TO BEAR.


...SO WHY?
WHY WOULD ITACHI BETRAY UCHIHA?


SINCE YOU PER-SONALLY NEVER EXPERI-ENCED WAR...
...YOU MAY NOT BE ABLE TO UNDER-STAND THIS.


?

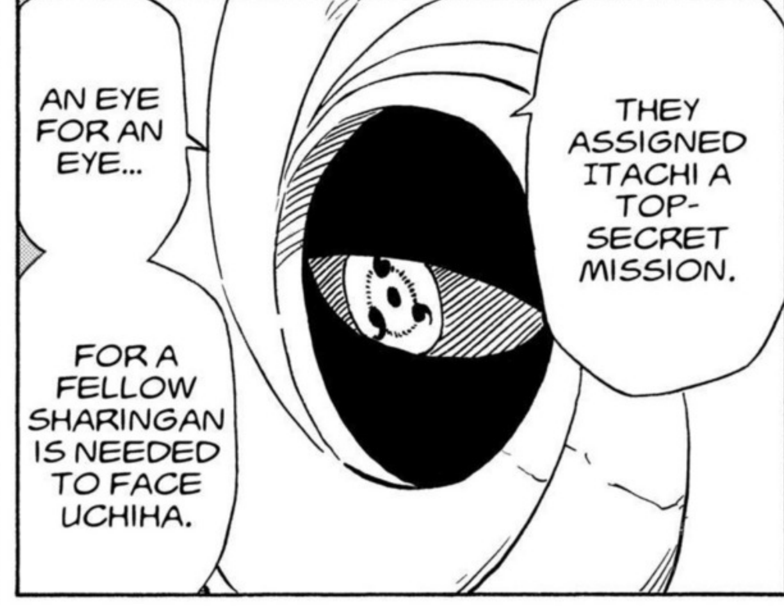

BUT WHEN ITACHI WAS ONLY FOUR YEARS OLD...
...THE THIRD GREAT NINJA WAR TOOK PLACE AND ITACHI WITNESSED THE DEATHS OF MANY PEOPLE.

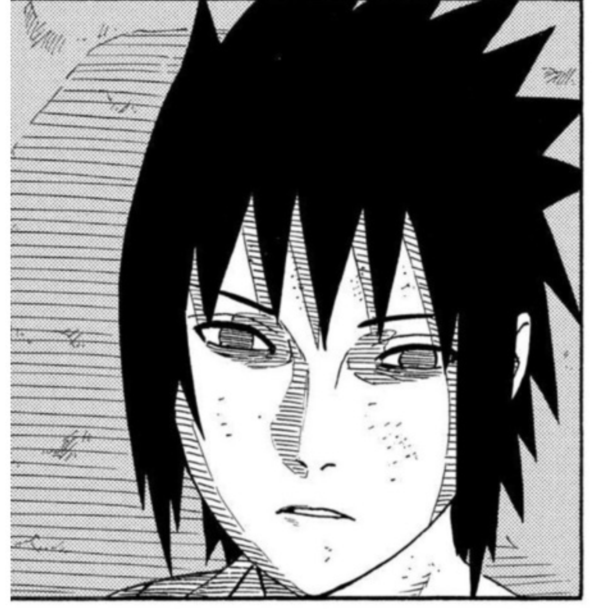

HE SHOULD'VE NEVER HAD TO EXPERI-ENCE WAR AT SUCH A YOUNG AGE...
...WAR IS HELL.
THAT TRAUMA MADE ITACHI INTO A CONFLICT-HATING, PEACE-LOVING MAN.

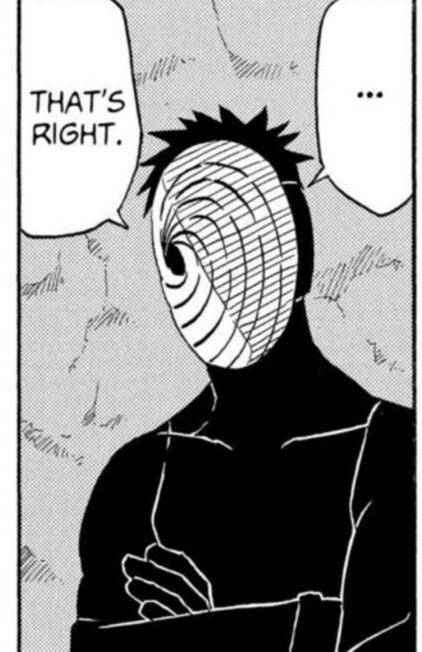

READ
THIS
WAY


ONE WHO ALWAYS HAD THE PEACE AND STABILITY OF THE VILLAGE...
...FOREMOST IN HIS MIND AND ACTIONS.


A SHINOBI WHO LOVED HIS VILLAGE, IRRESPECTIVE OF CLAN IDENTITY OR HISTORY.
AND THE KONOHA LEADERS USED THAT.


THEY ASSIGNED ITACHI A TOP-SECRET MISSION.
AN EYE FOR AN EYE...
FOR A FELLOW SHARINGAN IS NEEDED TO FACE UCHIHA.

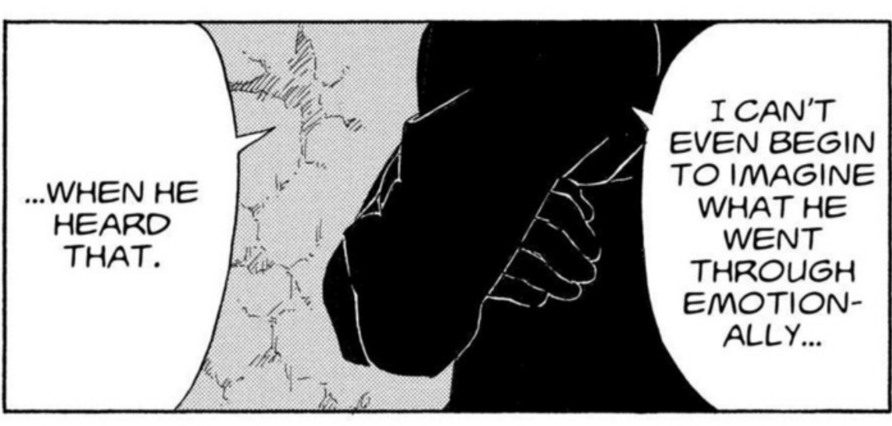


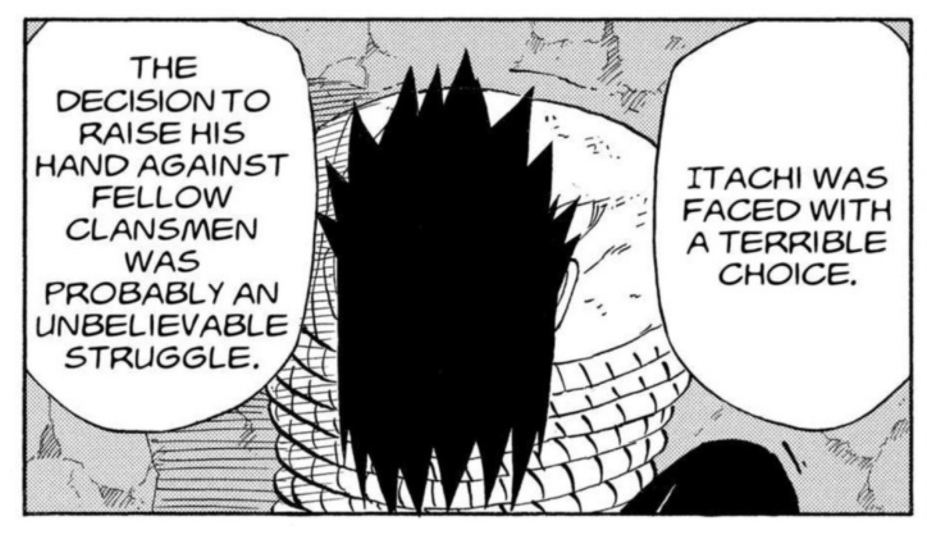

...
THAT'S RIGHT.

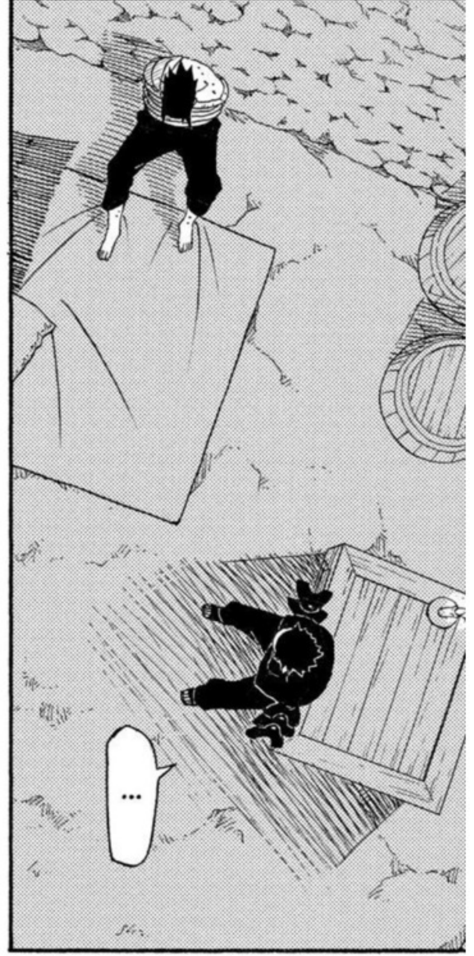

THAT MISSION...



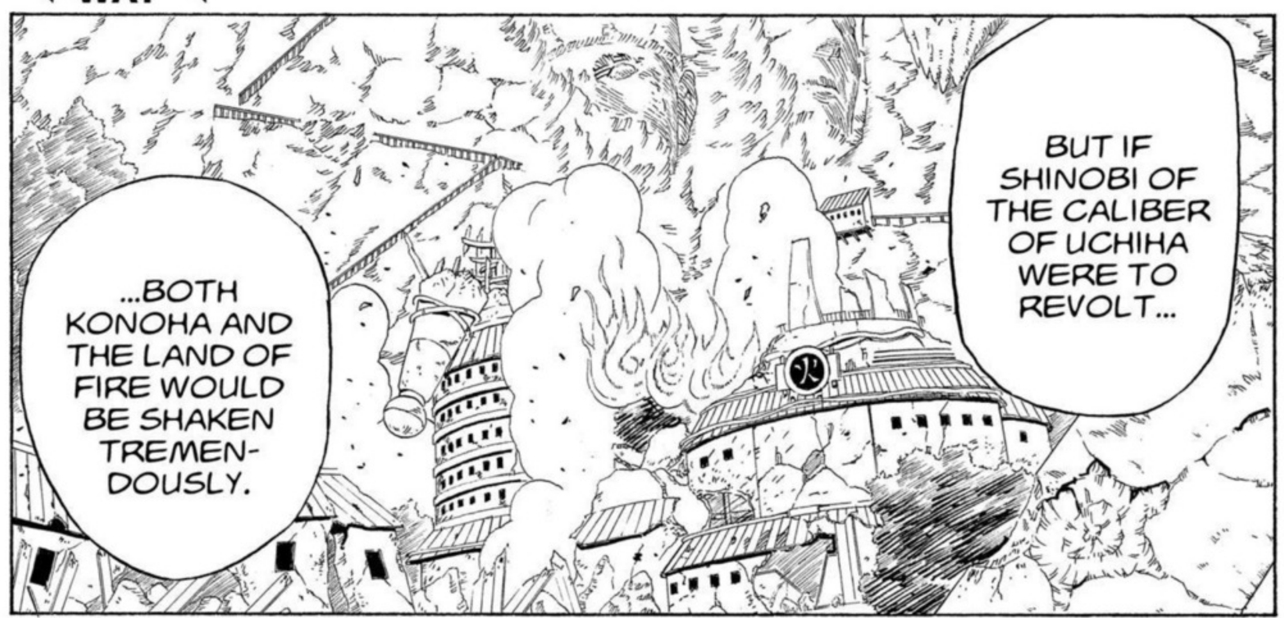
...WAS THE ERADICATION OF THE ENTIRE UCHIHA CLAN...


I CAN'T EVEN BEGIN TO IMAGINE WHAT HE WENT THROUGH EMOTIONALLY...
...WHEN HE HEARD THAT.


ITACHI WAS FACED WITH A TERRIBLE CHOICE.
THE DECISION TO RAISE HIS HAND AGAINST FELLOW CLANSMEN WAS PROBABLY AN UNBELIEVABLE STRUGGLE.

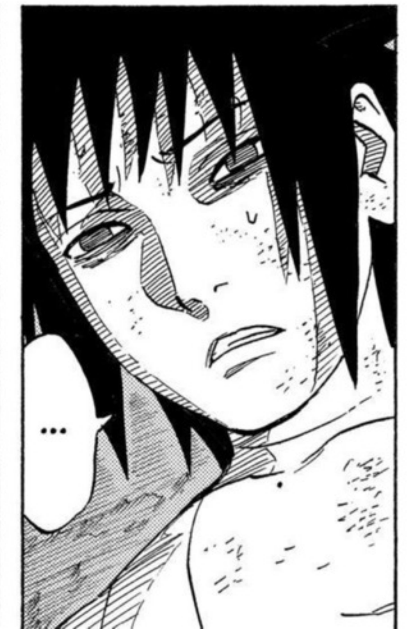

...


READ THIS WAY


BUT IF SHINOBI OF THE CALIBER OF UCHIHA WERE TO REVOLT...
...BOTH KONOHA AND THE LAND OF FIRE WOULD BE SHAKEN TREMEN-DOUSLY.

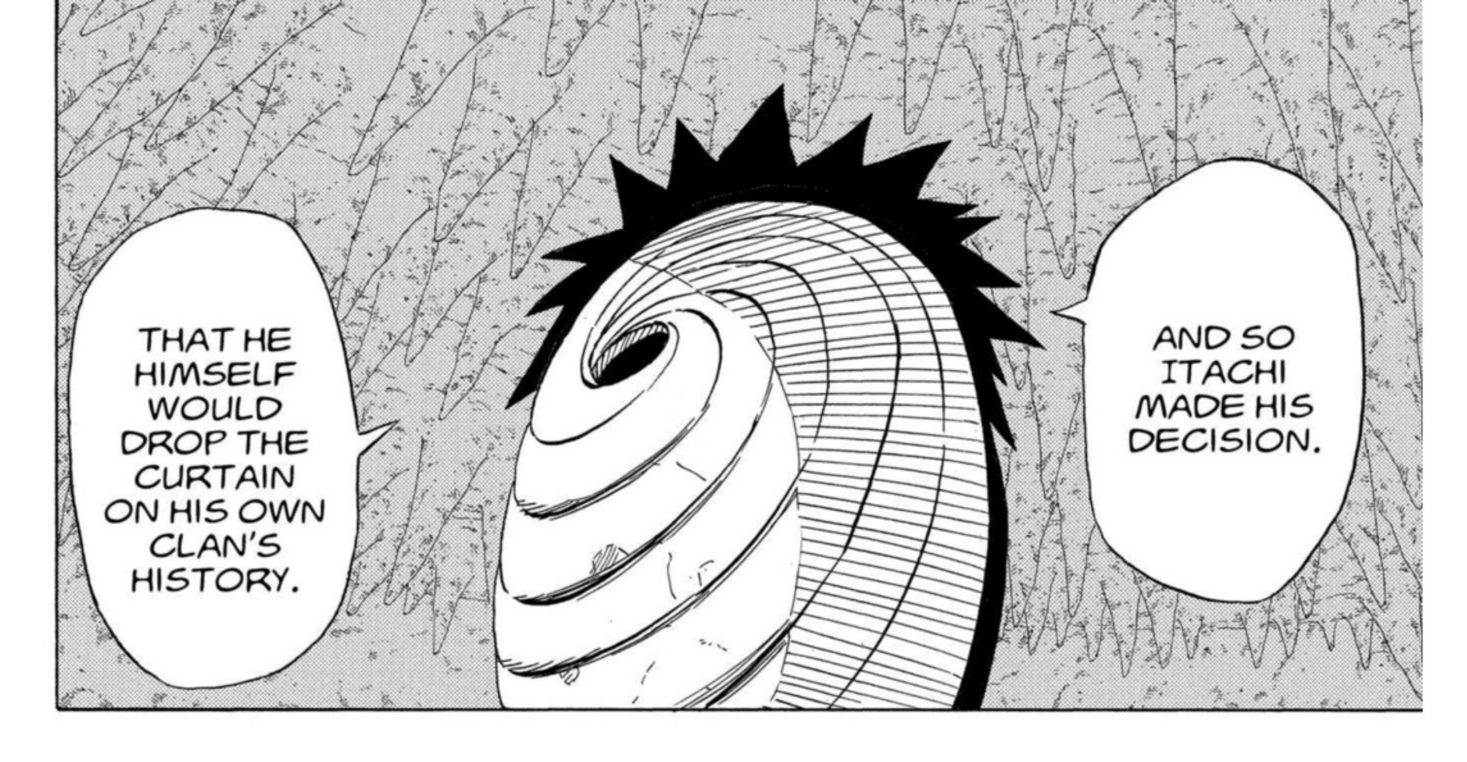

OTHER NATIONS WOULD TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THE SITU-ATION AND INVADE.
IT COULD EASILY BECOME THE TRIGGER FOR THE FOURTH GREAT NINJA WAR.

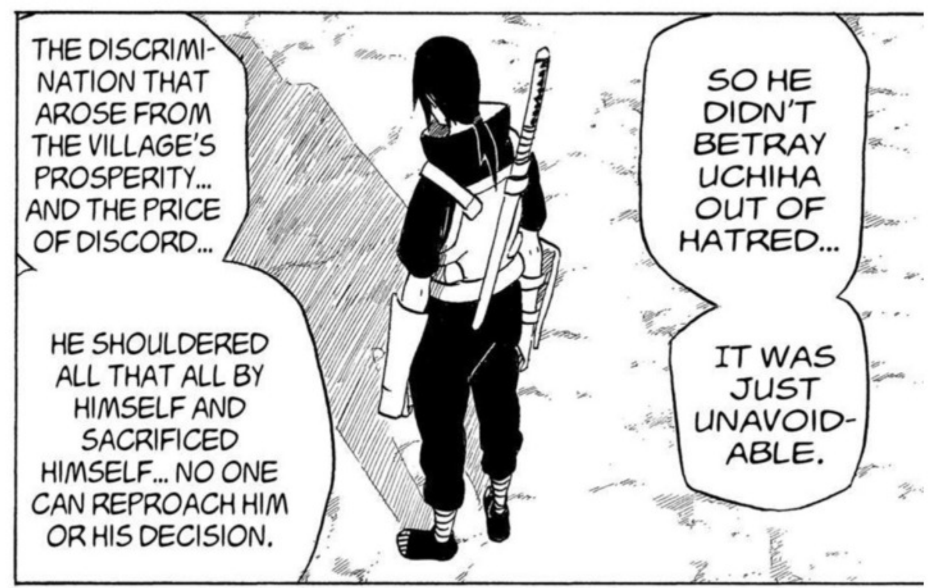

THE SELF-CENTERED ACT OF THE UCHIHA CLAN...
...WOULD LEAD TO MANY DEATHS, INCLUDING THAT OF INNO-CENT FOLKS UNRELATED TO THE SHINOBI WORLD.

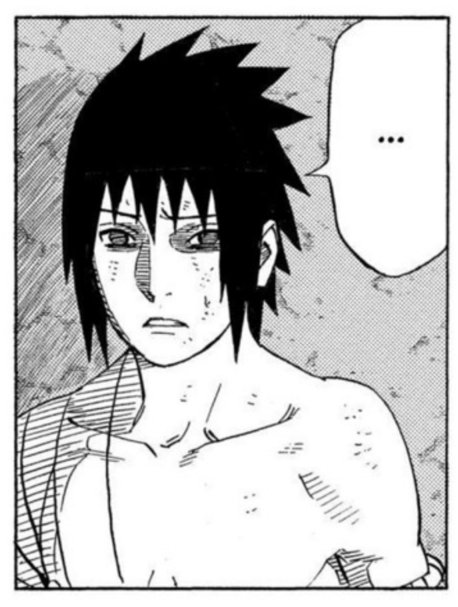

...


IF YOU WERE ITACHI, WHAT WOULD YOU HAVE DONE?


...


AND SO ITACHI MADE HIS DECISION.
THAT HE HIMSELF WOULD DROP THE CURTAIN ON HIS OWN CLAN'S HISTORY.


SO HE DIDN'T BETRAY UCHIHA OUT OF HATRED...
IT WAS JUST UNAVOIDABLE.
THE DISCRIMINATION THAT AROSE FROM THE VILLAGE'S PROSPERITY... AND THE PRICE OF DISCORD...
HE SHOULDERED ALL THAT ALL BY HIMSELF AND SACRIFICED HIMSELF... NO ONE CAN REPROACH HIM OR HIS DECISION.


...


IN ACTUALITY, BACK THEN...
...I HAD ALSO BEEN QUIETLY PLOTTING WAR.


FOR I HELD GRUDGES AGAINST BOTH SENJU-LED KONOHA AND UCHIHA.

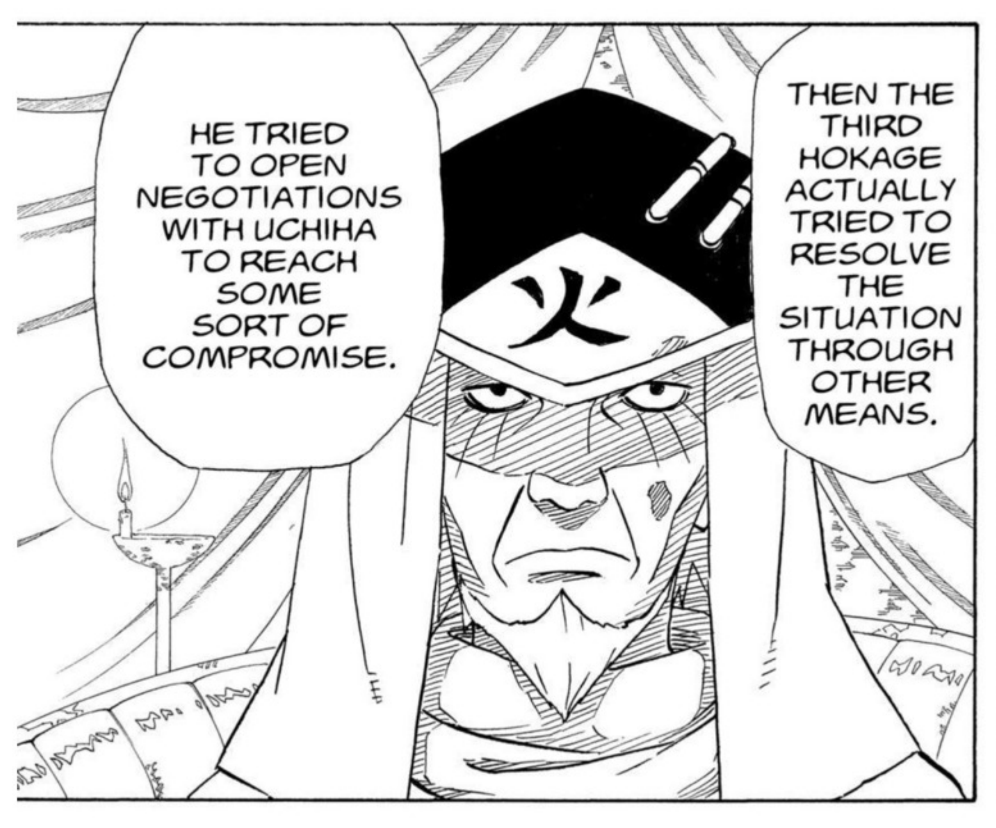

BUT ITACHI HAD EVEN PICKED UP ON THAT.
HE OF ALL PEOPLE KNEW OF MY EXISTENCE.


READ
THIS
WAY


ITACHI SOUGHT ME OUT...
...AND MADE ME A PROPOSAL.


IN EXCHANGE FOR LETTING ME CARRY OUT MY REVENGE AGAINST UCHIHA...
...I WAS TO LEAVE THE VILLAGE ALONE.


AND HE WOULD AID ME AGAINST THE CLAN...

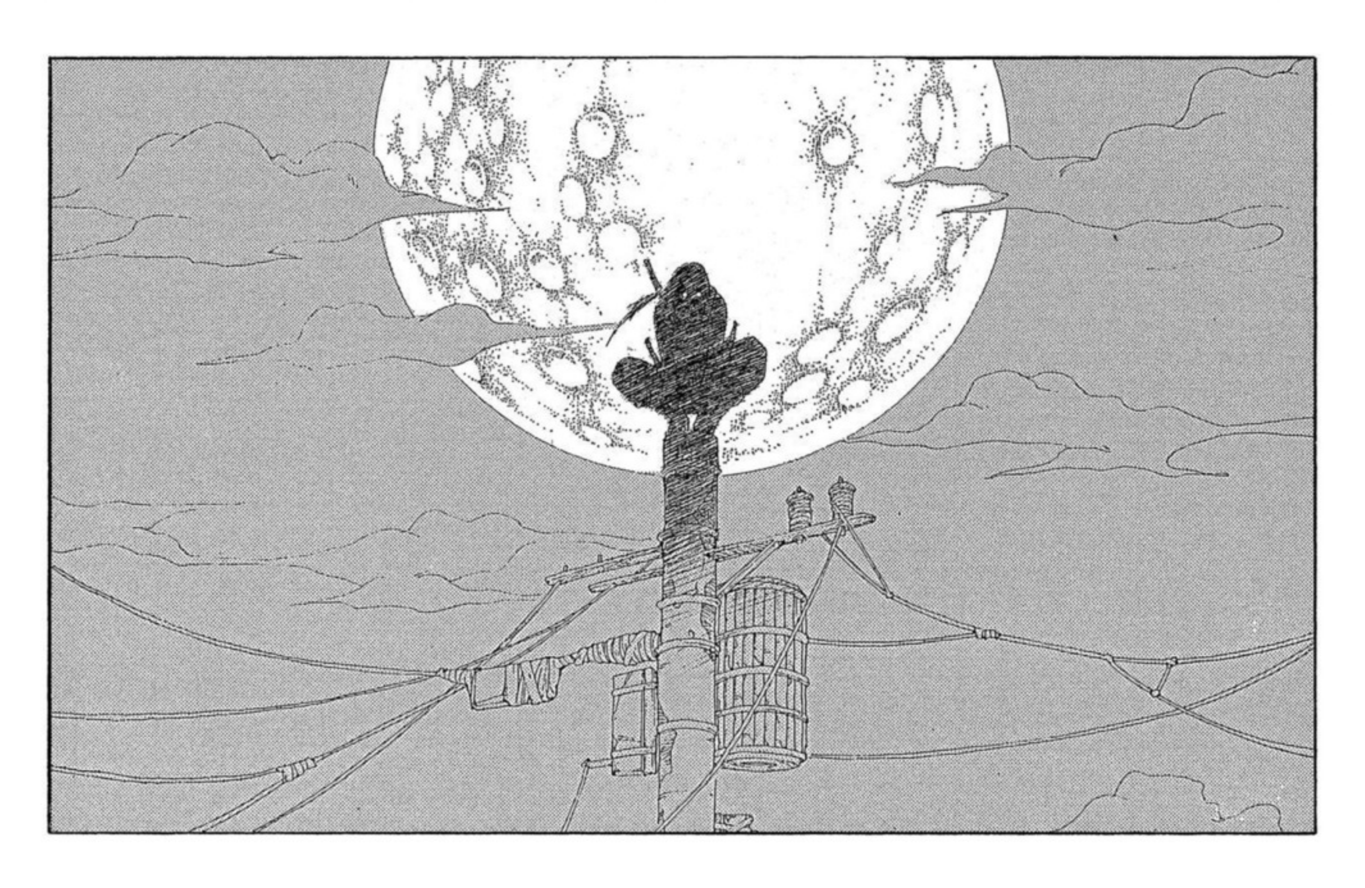

THEN THE THIRD HOKAGE ACTUALLY TRIED TO RESOLVE THE SITUATION THROUGH OTHER MEANS.
HE TRIED TO OPEN NEGOTIATIONS WITH UCHIHA TO REACH SOME SORT OF COMPROMISE.



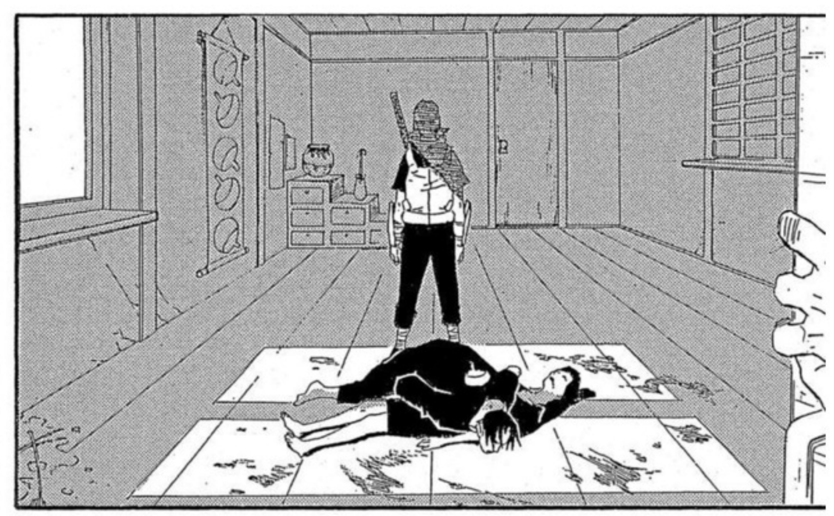

BUT TIME RAN OUT...
...AND HIS EFFORTS FAILED...




...LEADING TO THAT NIGHT...



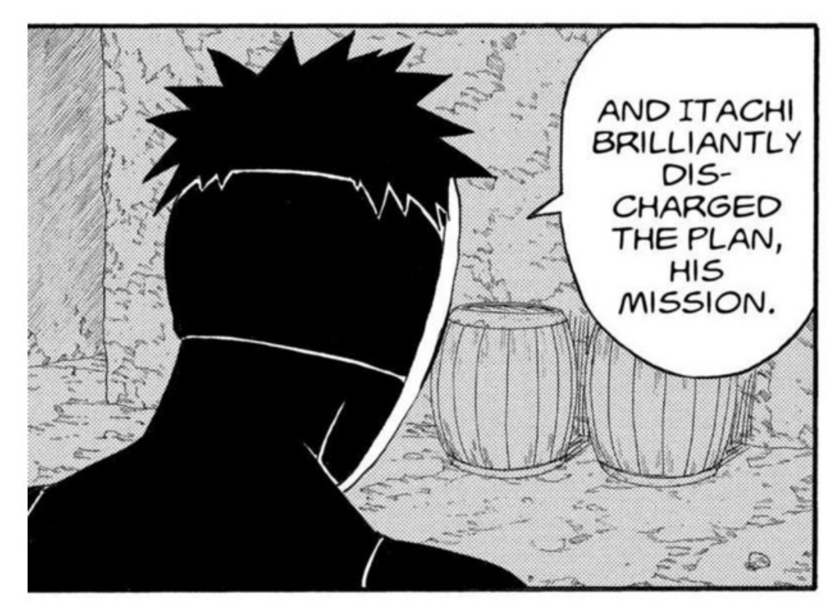

IT WAS A MIS- SION...

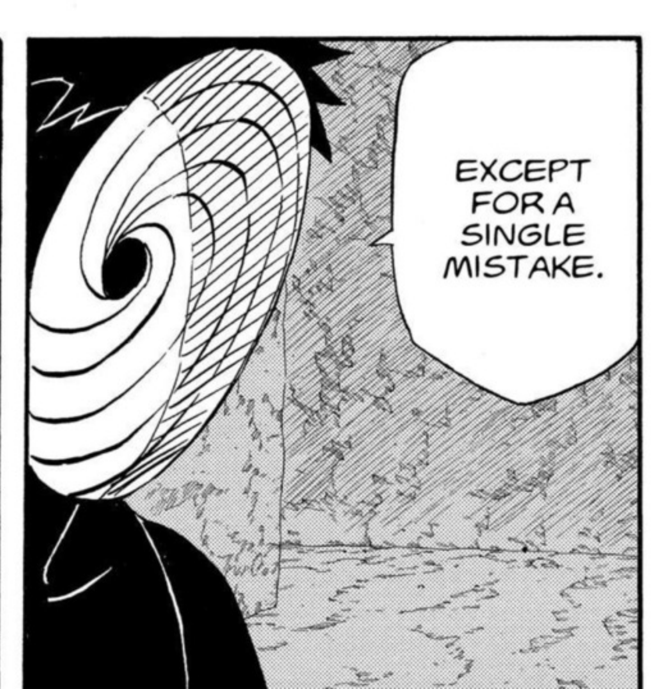


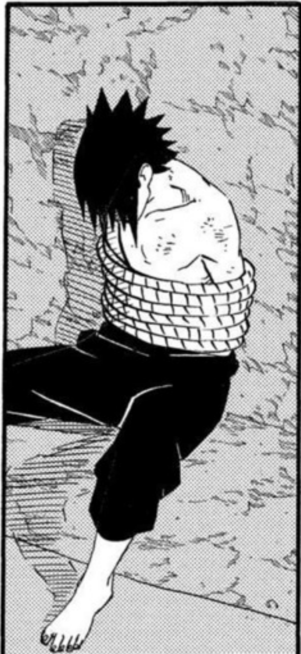

READ THIS WAY

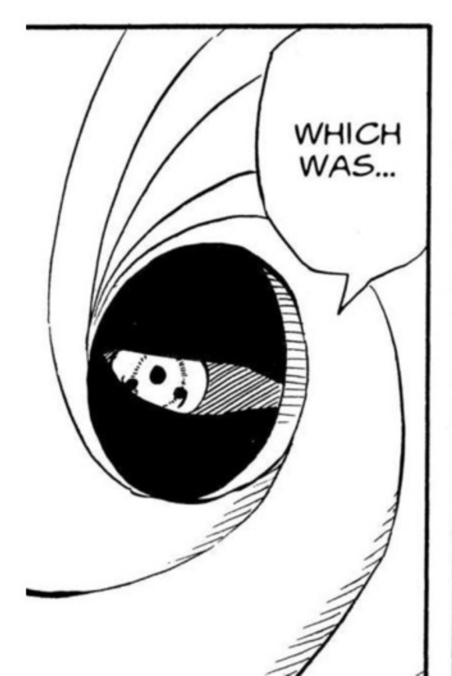

...TO BECOME KNOWN AS A CRIMINAL WHO MURDERED HIS OWN CLAN...
...BEAR THE BURDEN OF DISGRACE AND BECOME A ROGUE SHINOBI...
ALL OF IT WAS PLANNED.




AND ITACHI BRILLIANTLY DIS-CHARGED THE PLAN, HIS MISSION.

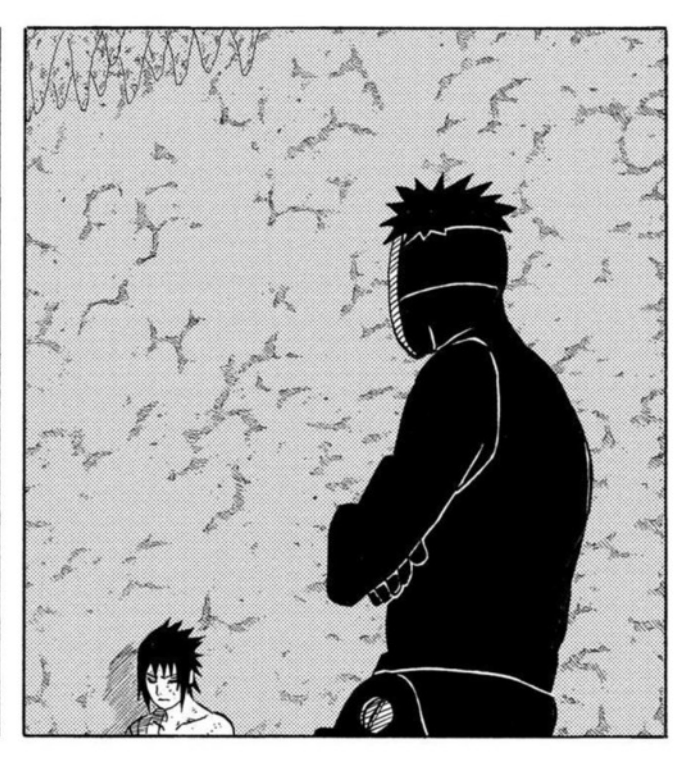

EXCEPT FOR A SINGLE MISTAKE.



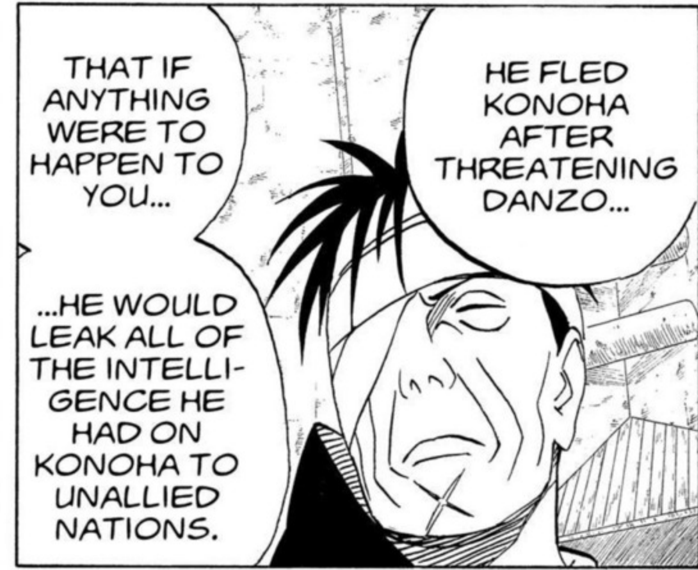

WHICH WAS...

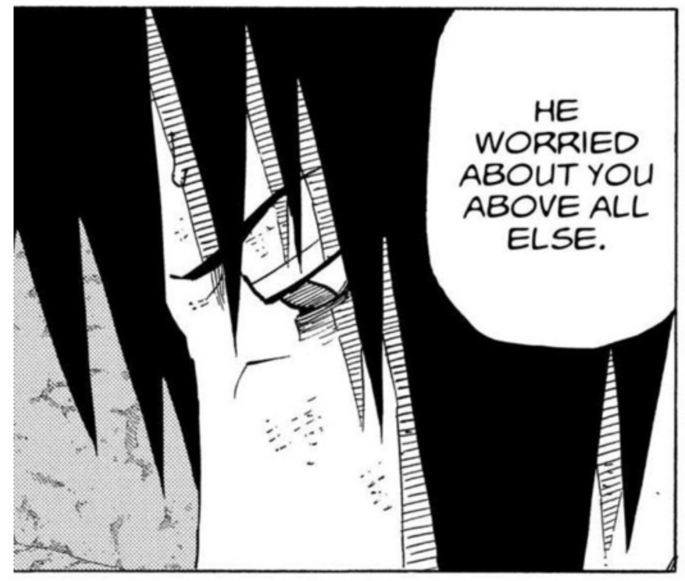

...HE COULDN'T KILL HIS LITTLE BROTHER.


READ THIS WAY



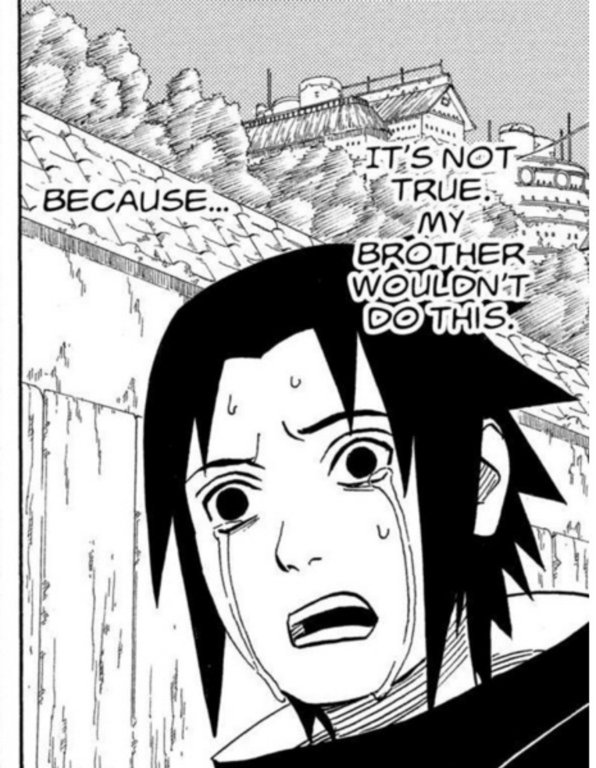

AFTERWARDS, ITACHI APPEALED TO THE THIRD HOKAGE, BESEECHING HIM TO PROTECT YOU...
...AGAINST DANZO AND THE COUNSELORS.


HE FLED KONOHA AFTER THREATENING DANZO...
THAT IF ANYTHING WERE TO HAPPEN TO YOU...
...HE WOULD LEAK ALL OF THE INTELLIGENCE HE HAD ON KONOHA TO UNALLIED NATIONS.

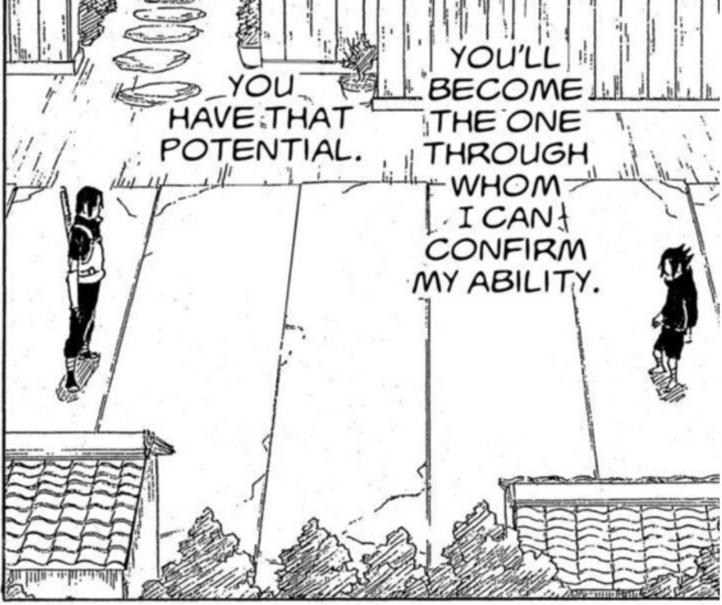

HE WORRIED ABOUT YOU ABOVE ALL ELSE.


AND YET HE COULDN'T TELL YOU THE FULL TRUTH.
SO HE TOLD YOU AS MUCH AS HE COULD.



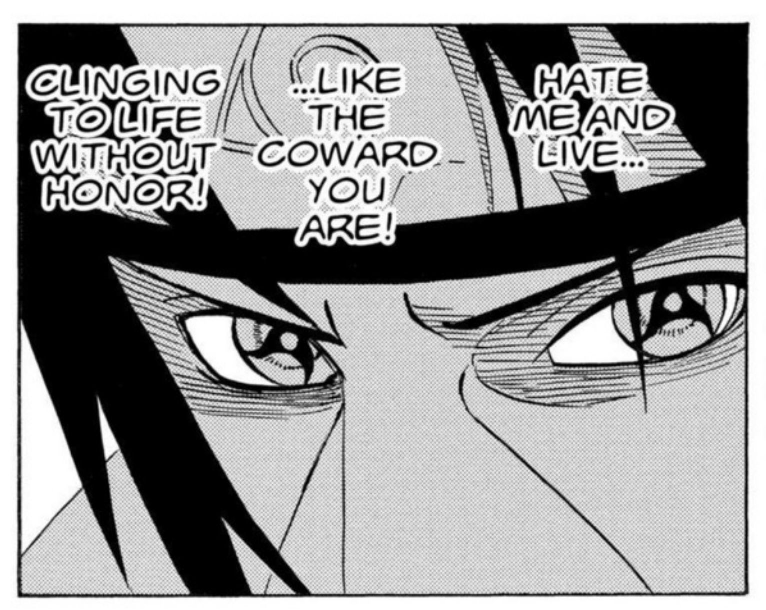

IT'S NOT TRUE. MY BROTHER WOULDN'T DO THIS.
BECAUSE...


PRETENDING TO BE THE KIND OF BROTHER YOU HOPED FOR...
...WAS TO DETERMINE YOUR ABILITY....


YOU'LL BECOME THE ONE THROUGH WHOM I CAN CONFIRM MY ABILITY.
YOU HAVE THAT POTENTIAL.


YOU'VE FELT ANGER AND HATED ME. YOU'VE ALWAYS HOPED TO SURPASS ME...
...SO I'LL LET YOU LIVE... FOR MY SAKE.

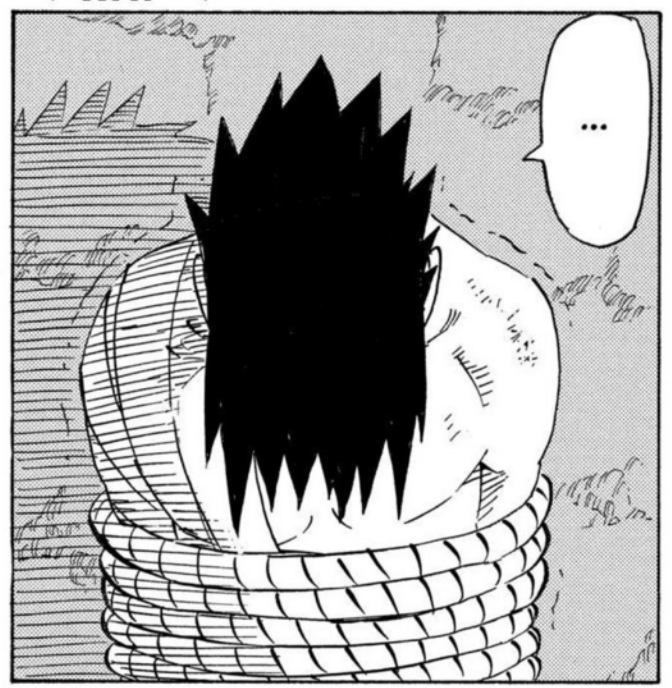

BABY BROTHER, YOU'RE PATHETIC. IF YOU WANT TO KILL ME...
...SETTLE FOR HATING ME...


HATE ME AND LIVE...
...LIKE THE COWARD YOU ARE!
CLINGING TO LIFE WITHOUT HONOR!



AND SOMEDAY, WHEN YOU HAVE THE SAME EYES AS I...

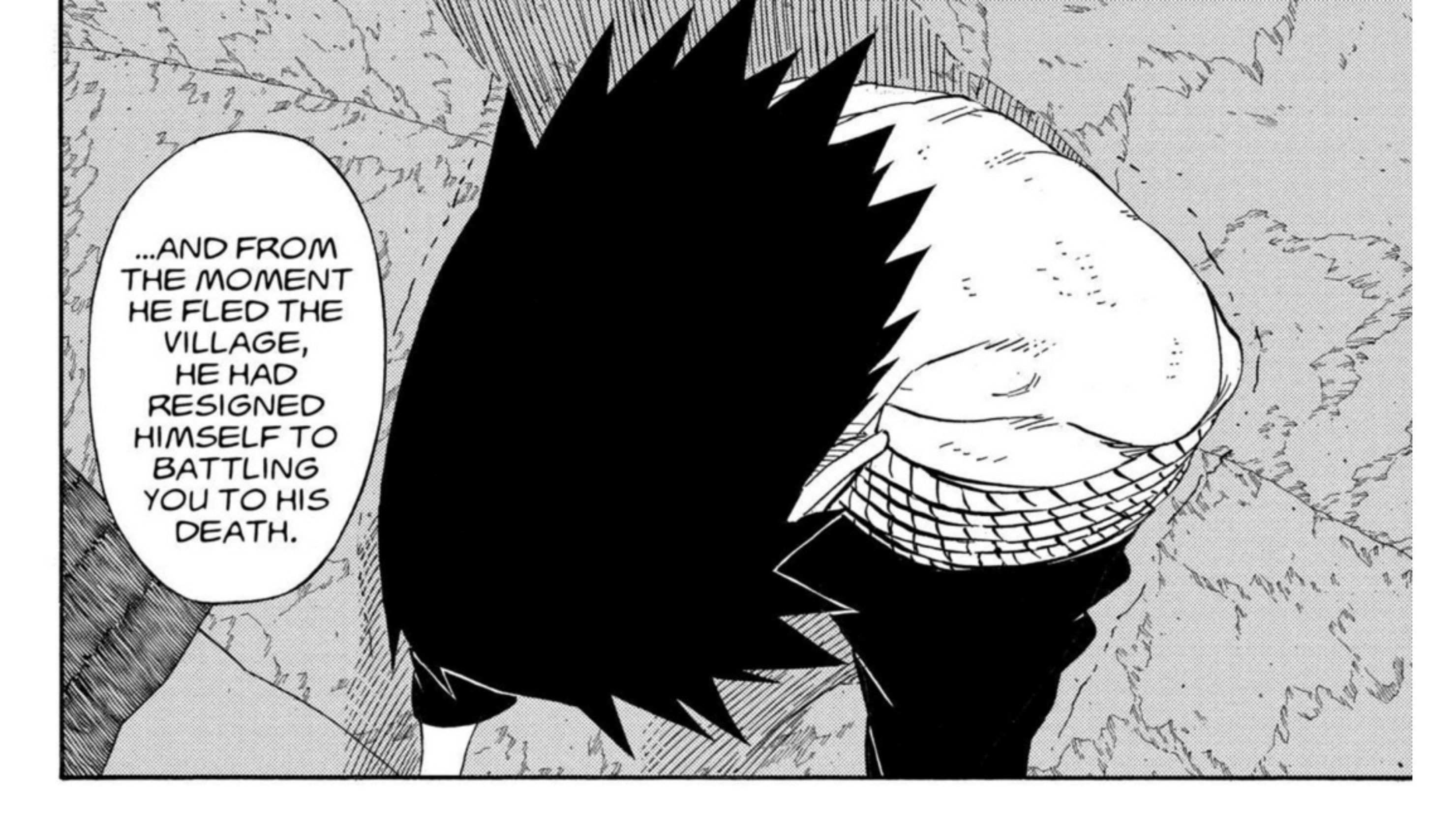
...YOU WILL FIND ME AGAIN.



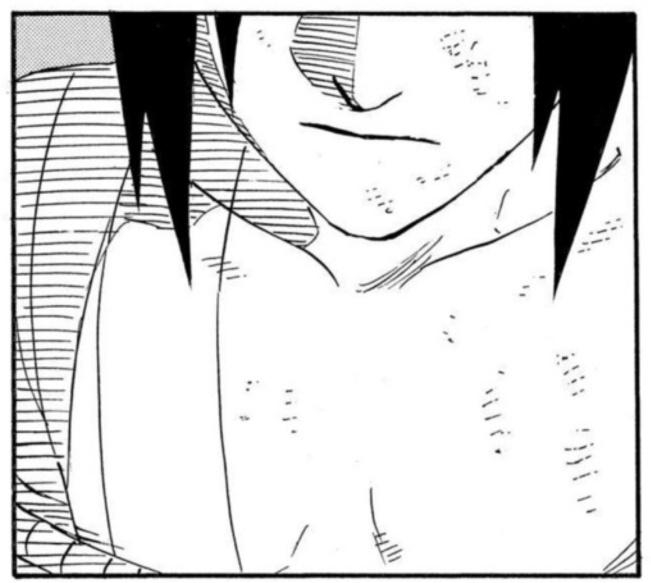







...AND FROM THE MOMENT HE FLED THE VILLAGE, HE HAD RESIGNED HIMSELF TO BATTLING YOU TO HIS DEATH.


IN ORDER TO BESTOW UPON YOU NEW POWERS...

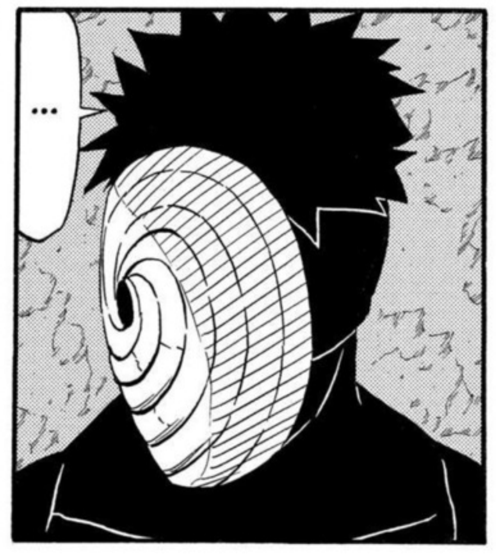


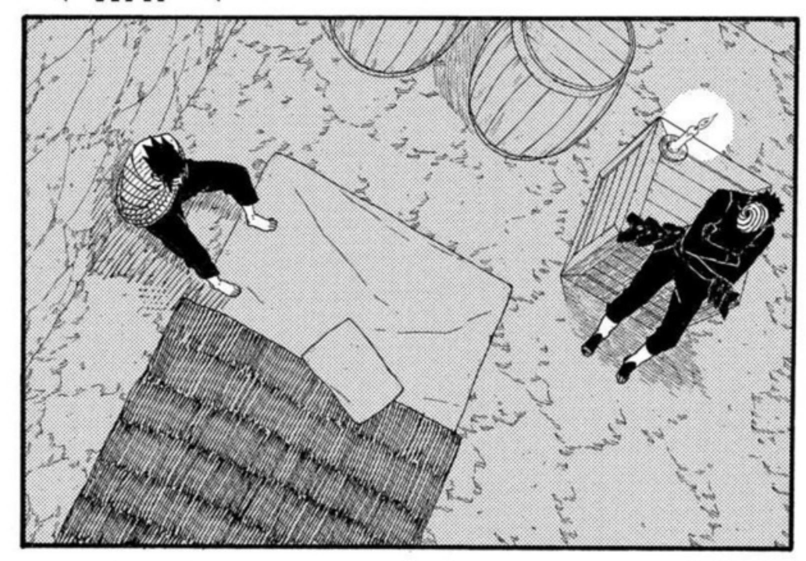

THAT IS ITACHI'S TRUTH.


TH...


...THAT'S A LIE...







IT'S GOT TO BE A LIE...

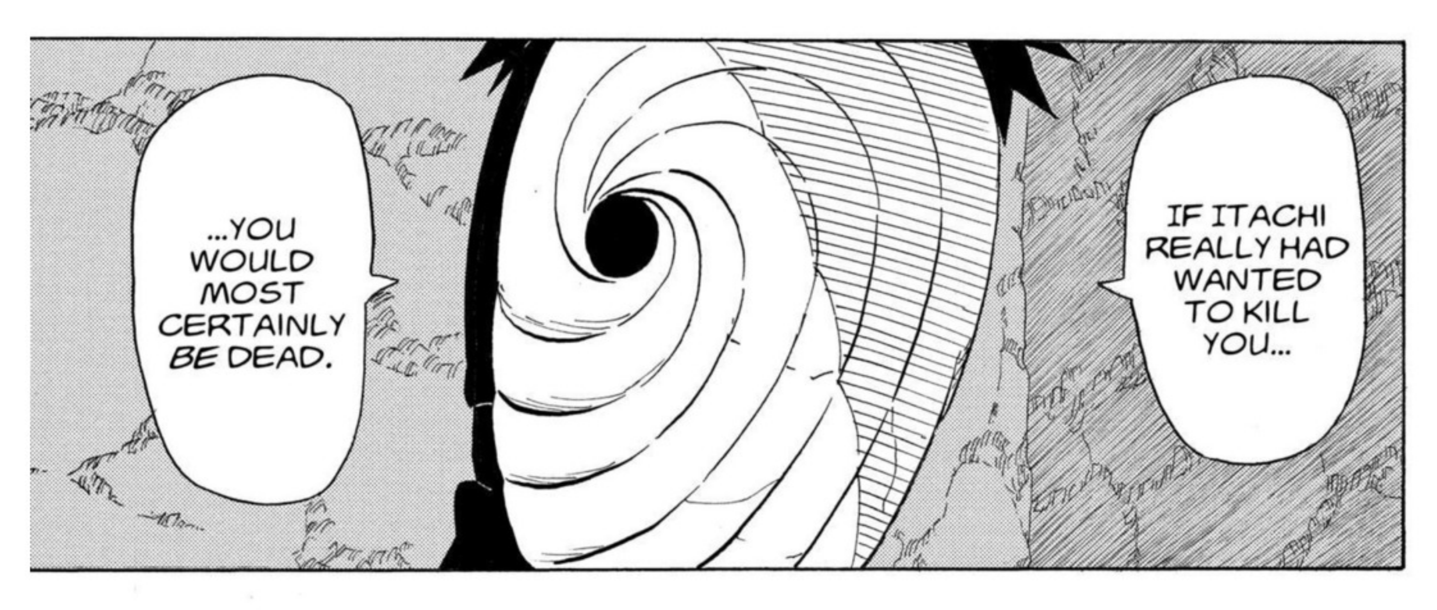

NARUTO

Number 401: Illusions









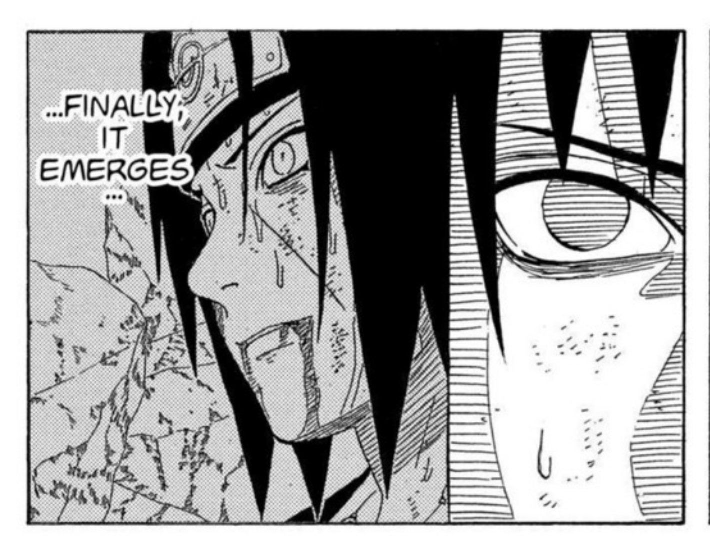


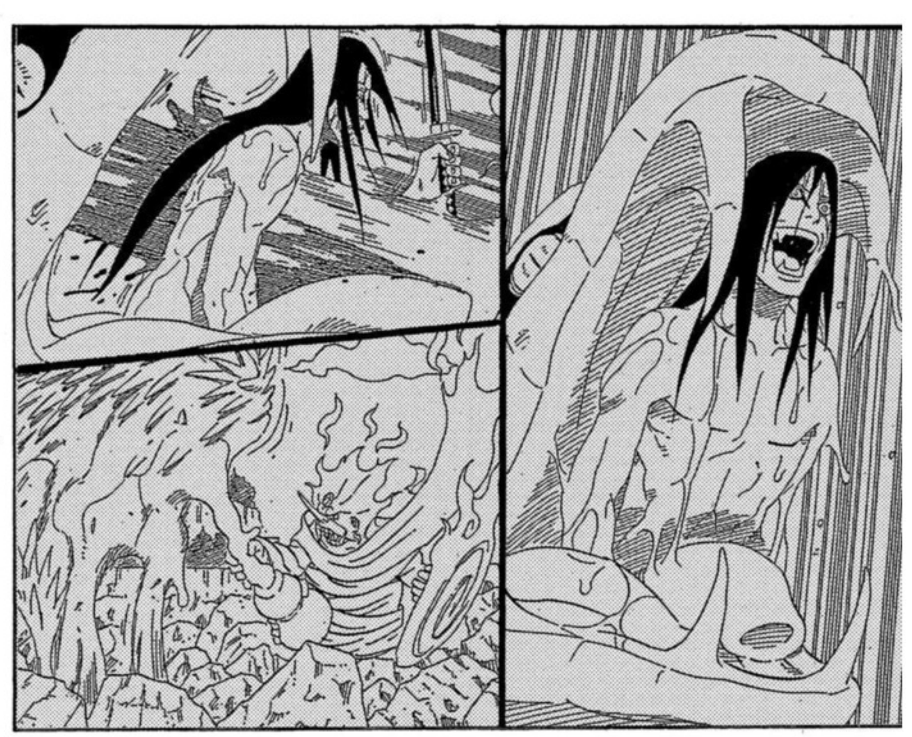


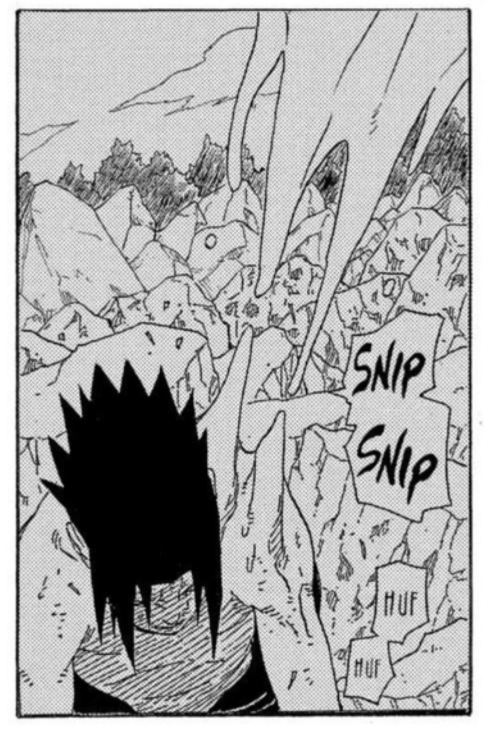

EVEN YOUR CON-TINGENCY PLANS WERE PART OF HIS CAL-CULATIONS.
ITACHI HAD TO PRESSURE YOU DURING THAT BATTLE.


...!


I'M SURE YOU...
...ALREADY UNDER-STAND WHY?

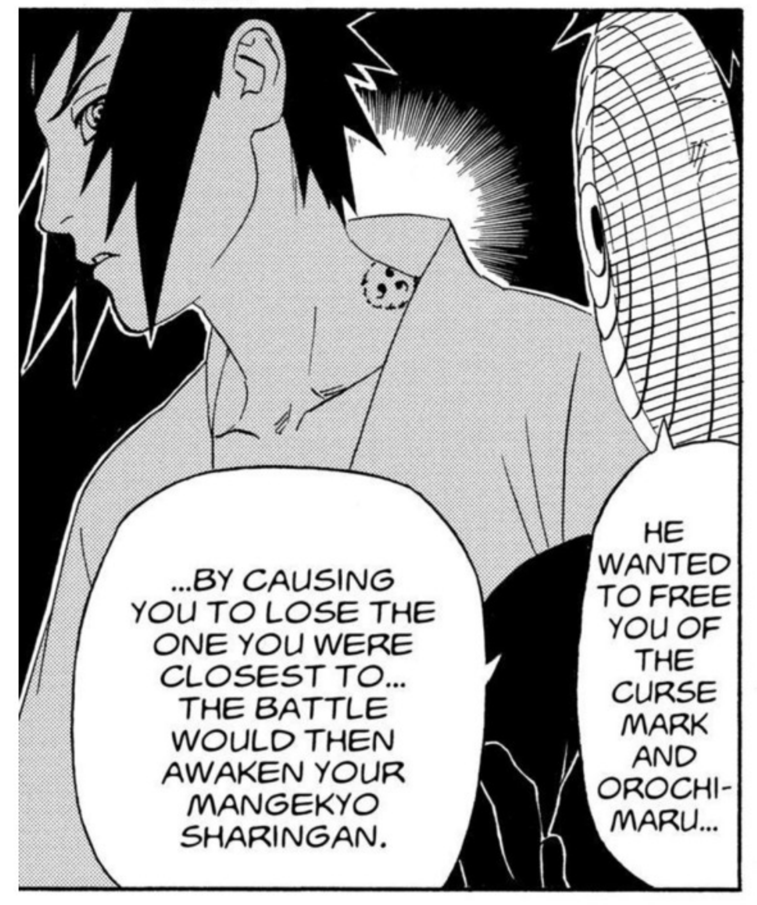

...FINALLY, IT EMERGES ...

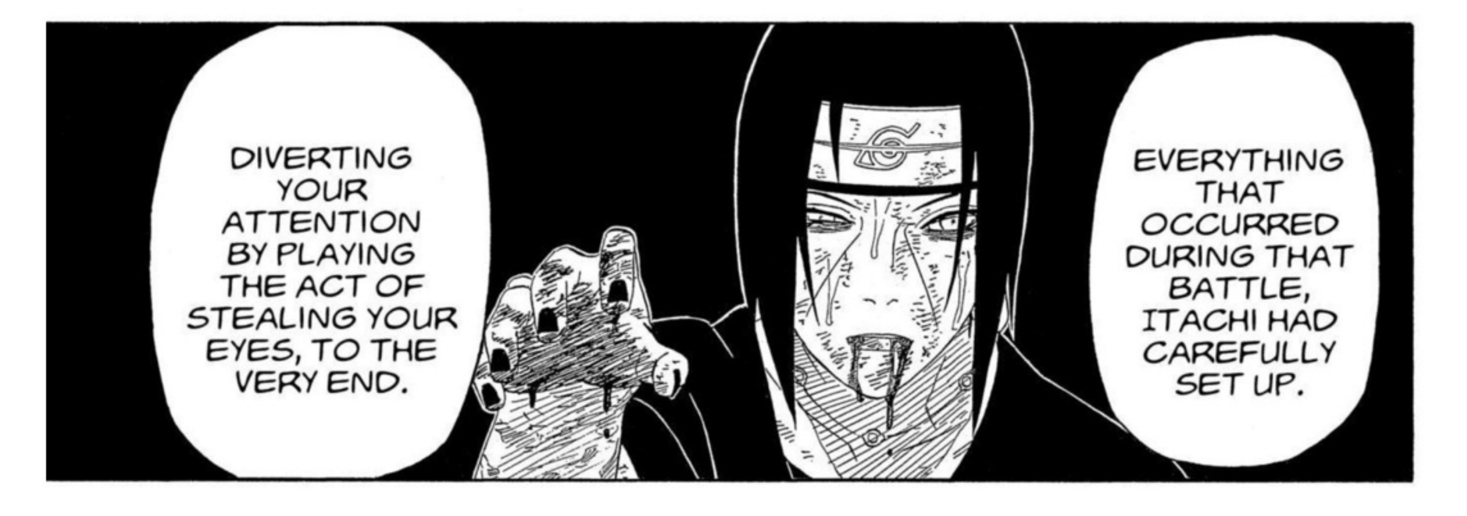



SNIP
SNIP
HUF
HUF

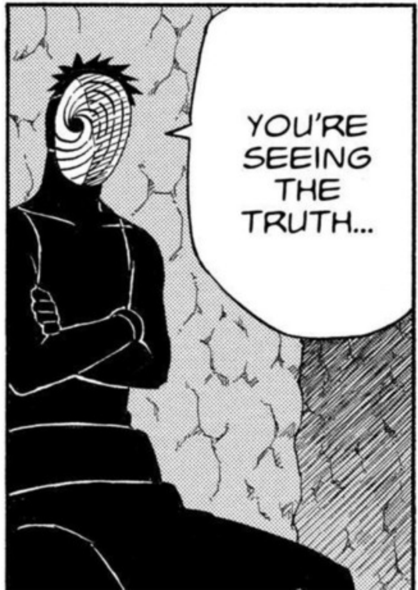

READ THIS WAY



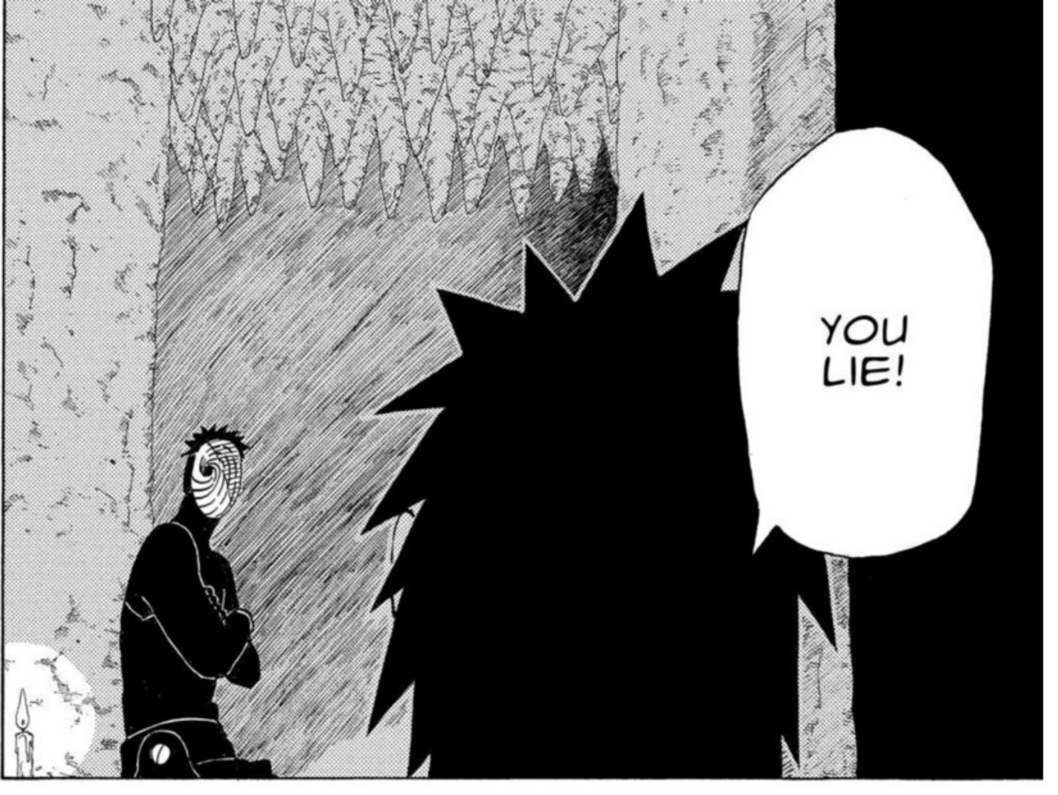

HE WANTED TO FREE YOU OF THE CURSE MARK AND OROCHI-MARU...
...BY CAUSING YOU TO LOSE THE ONE YOU WERE CLOSEST TO... THE BATTLE WOULD THEN AWAKEN YOUR MANGEKYO SHARINGAN.

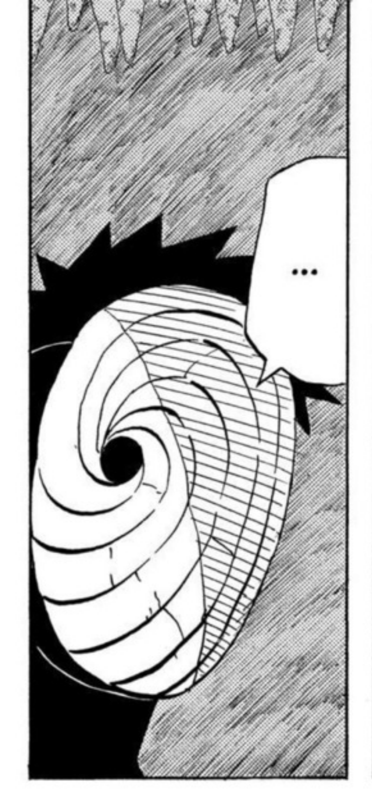

EVERYTHING THAT OCCURRED DURING THAT BATTLE, ITACHI HAD CAREFULLY SET UP.
DIVERTING YOUR ATTENTION BY PLAYING THE ACT OF STEALING YOUR EYES, TO THE VERY END.


...


YOU'RE SEEING THE TRUTH...




YOU LIE!


...


YOU SENT NINE TAILS TO ASSAULT THE VILLAGE!
ITACHI SAID IT WAS ALL YOUR DOING!

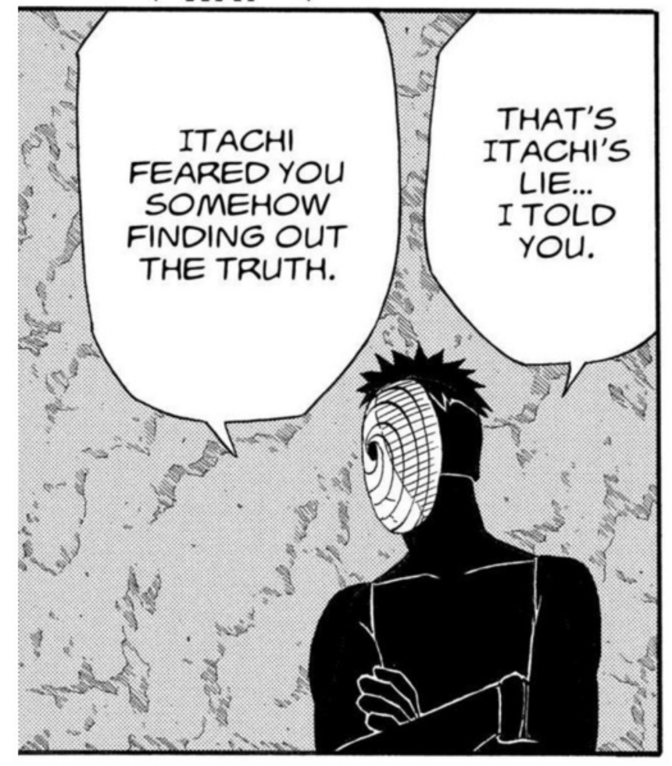

SIXTEEN YEARS AGO... WHEN NINE TAILS ASSAULTED KONOHA, THAT WAS MADARA'S DOING, OF COURSE.
BUT THAT TOO, THE FOURTH HOKAGE STOPPED. IN SHORT...

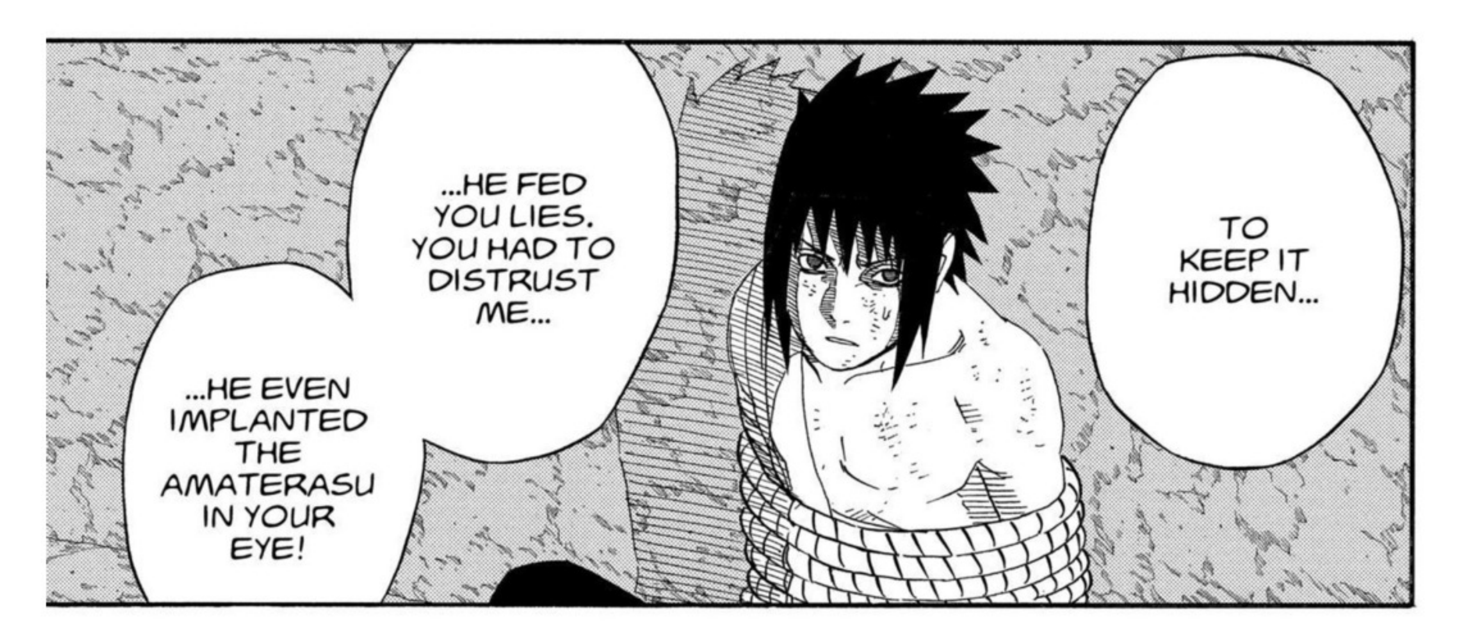

MADARA IS A BITTER, DEFEATED DOG...
...HE IS NOT WORTHY OR CAPABLE OF GRASPING UCHIHA'S TRUE GREAT-NESS.


...I AM THE ONE...
...WHO SHALL SURPASS MADARA AND APPROACH BECOMING THE ULTIMATE SHINOBI.

READ THIS WAY

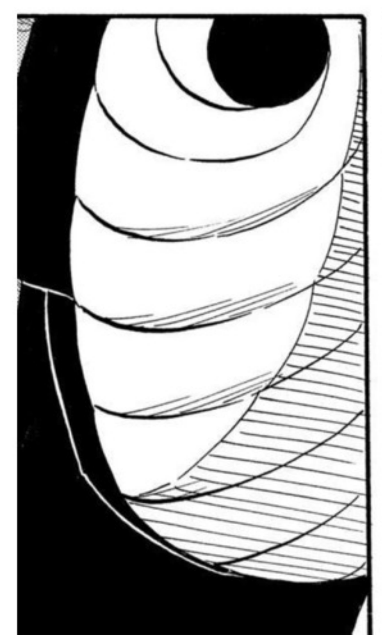


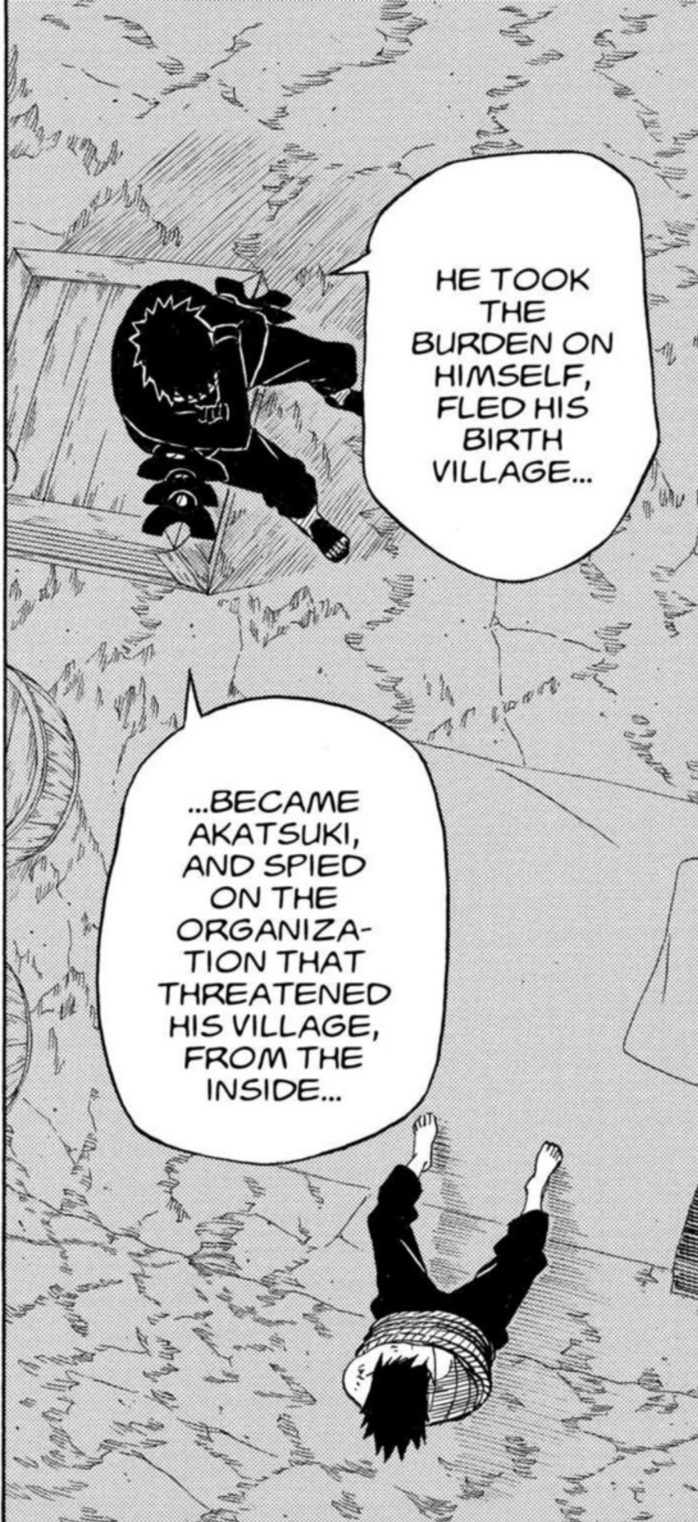




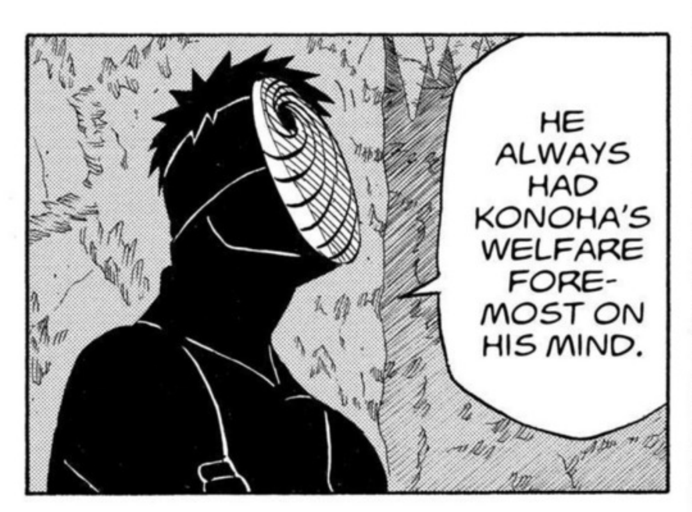


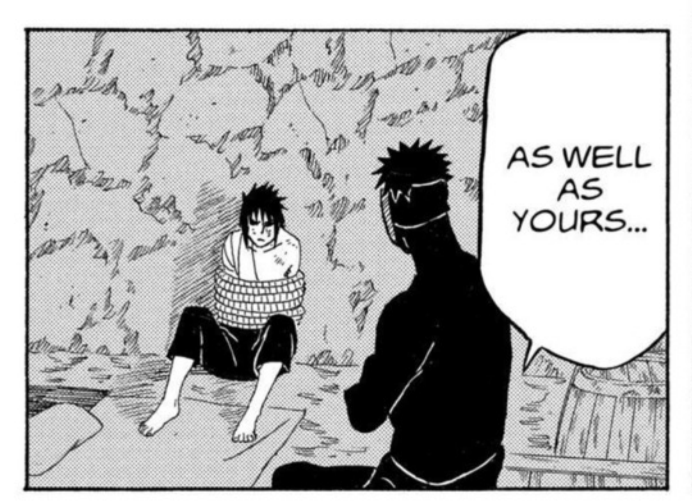





HE TOOK THE BURDEN ON HIMSELF, FLED HIS BIRTH VILLAGE...
...BECAME AKATSUKI, AND SPIED ON THE ORGANIZATION THAT THREATENED HIS VILLAGE, FROM THE INSIDE...


...!


HE ALWAYS HAD KONOHA'S WELFARE FORE-MOST ON HIS MIND.


AS WELL AS YOURS...


ITACHI APPEARED IN KONOHA AFTER THE DEATH OF YOUR PROTECTOR, THE THIRD HOKAGE...

...TO REMIND DANZO AND THE COUNSELORS HE WAS STILL ALIVE.

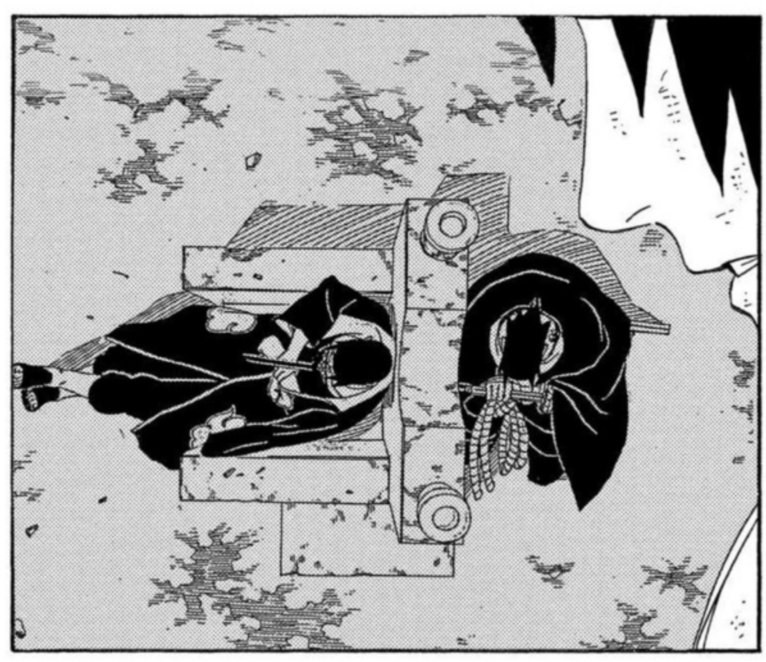
HE WANTED TO MAKE SURE YOU...

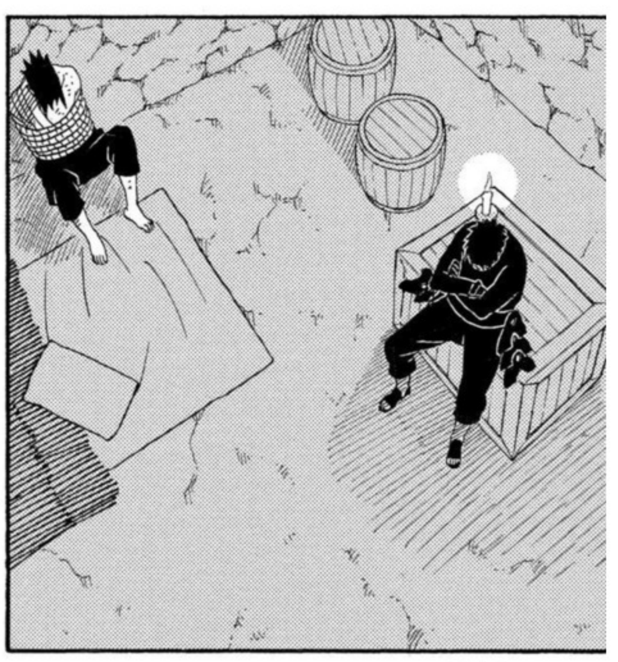
STOP IT!!

YOU LIE!!

IT'S ALL A BIG...

YOU'RE ALIVE, AREN'T YOU?!!






READ
THIS
WAY


...EVERY SINGLE ONE OF US GOES THROUGH LIFE DEPENDING ON AND BOUND BY OUR INDIVIDUAL KNOWLEDGE AND AWARENESS.
AND WE CALL IT REALITY.


HOWEVER, BOTH KNOWLEDGE AND AWARENESS ARE EQUIVOCAL. ONE'S REALITY MIGHT BE AN ILLUSION.
WE ALL LIVE INSIDE OUR OWN FANTASIES. DON'T YOU THINK?


...THOSE SHARINGAN...
...HOW MUCH CAN YOU ACTUALLY SEE?


MY EYES ARE NOT THE SAME AS THEY WERE BEFORE!
MY SHARINGAN CAN SEE THROUGH GENJUTSU!


HEH... BULLISH WORDS AND ATTITUDE, AS ALWAYS.
WELL...

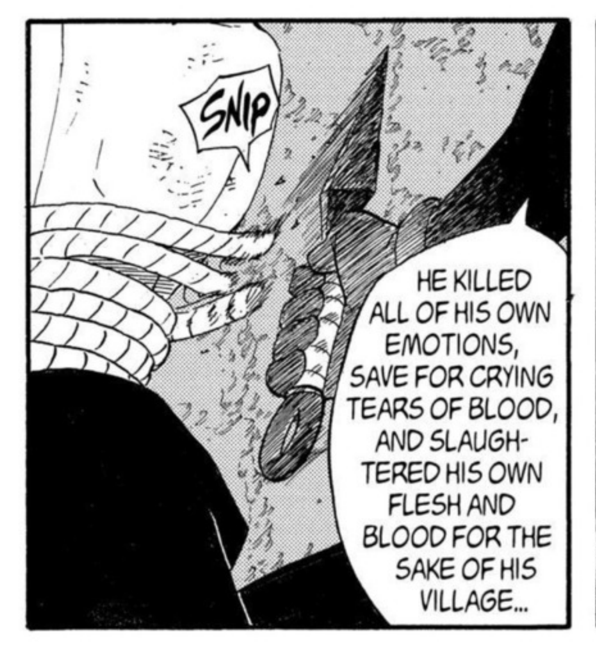

I'LL ACCEPT THOSE WORDS, FOR NOW, AT LEAST.

YOUR EYES DIDN'T SEE THROUGH ITACHI AT ALL.
NOR A SINGLE ONE OF HIS ILLUSIONS.
FSH



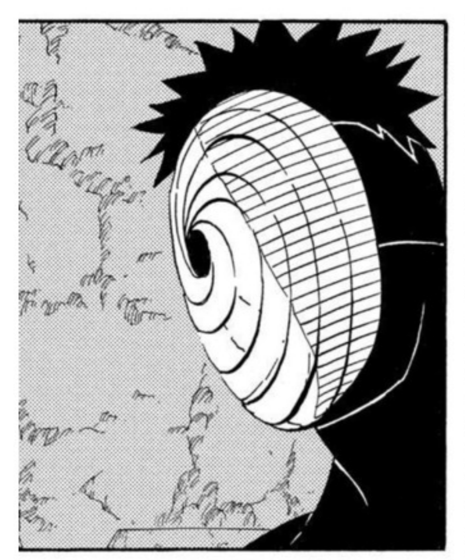


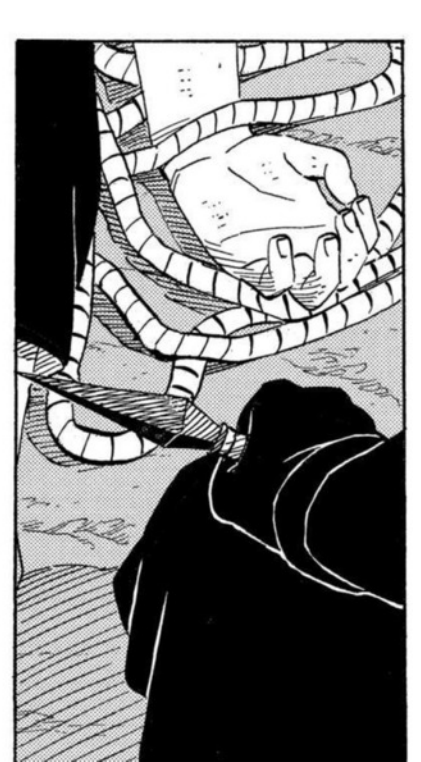




...BUT HE JUST COULDN'T BRING HIMSELF TO KILL YOU.





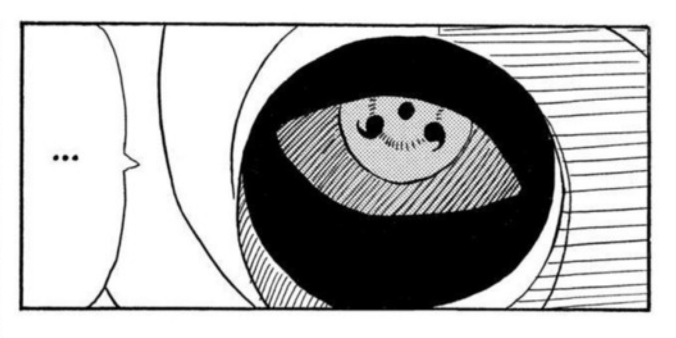







...WAS MORE PRECIOUS THAN EVEN THE VILLAGE.


READ THIS WAY


...

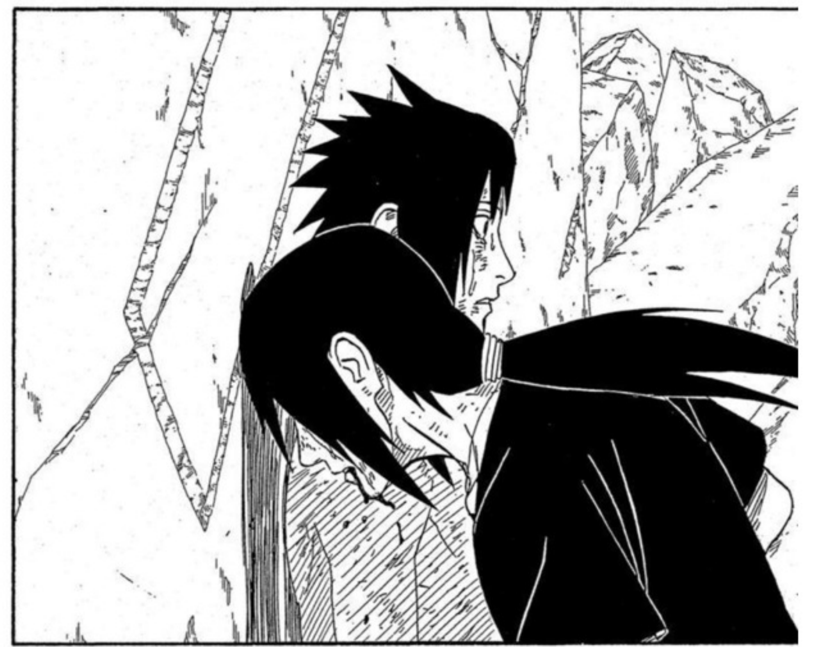

UP UNTIL THE VERY MOMENT OF HIS DEATH...
...NO, EVEN AFTER HE DIED...


...IN ORDER TO CONFER UPON YOU NEW POWERS...

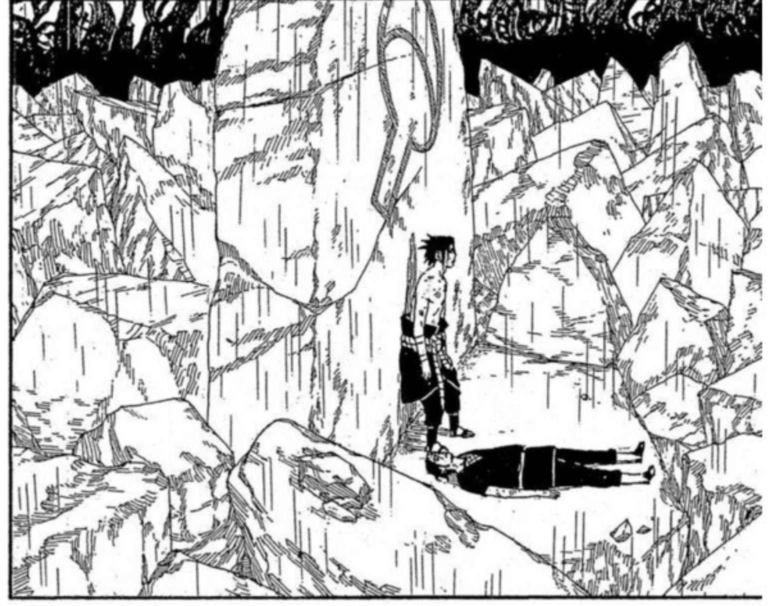

...AND BY ALLOWING YOU TO DEFEAT HIM...


...HE ACHIEVED REVENGE AGAINST THE UCHIHA CLAN...
...BY MAKING YOU OUT TO BE KONOHA'S HERO.


RAVAGED BY ILLNESS, PAINFULLY AWARE OF HIS IMPENDING DEATH...
...HE FORCEFULLY PROLONGED HIS LIFE WITH MEDI-CATION...

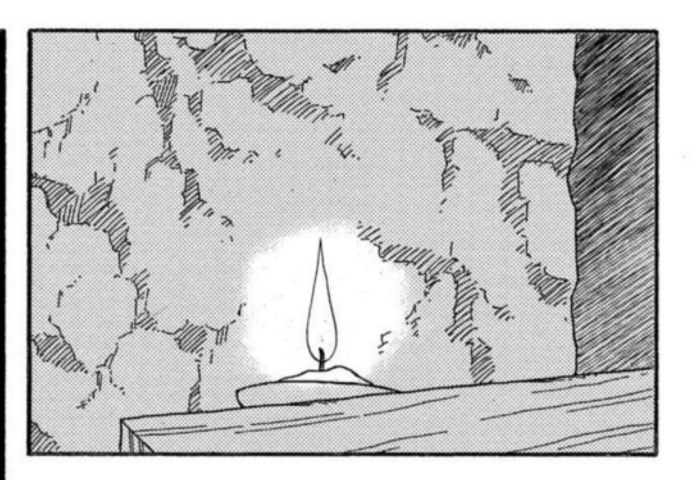



...ALL FOR HIS MOST BELOVED LITTLE BROTHER...



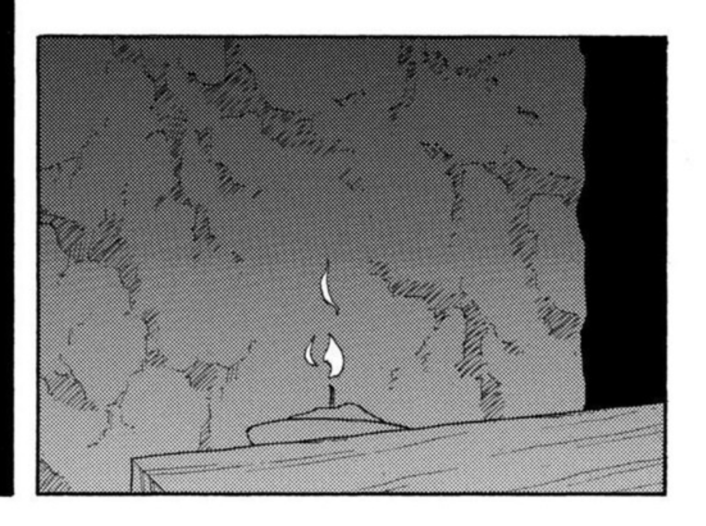






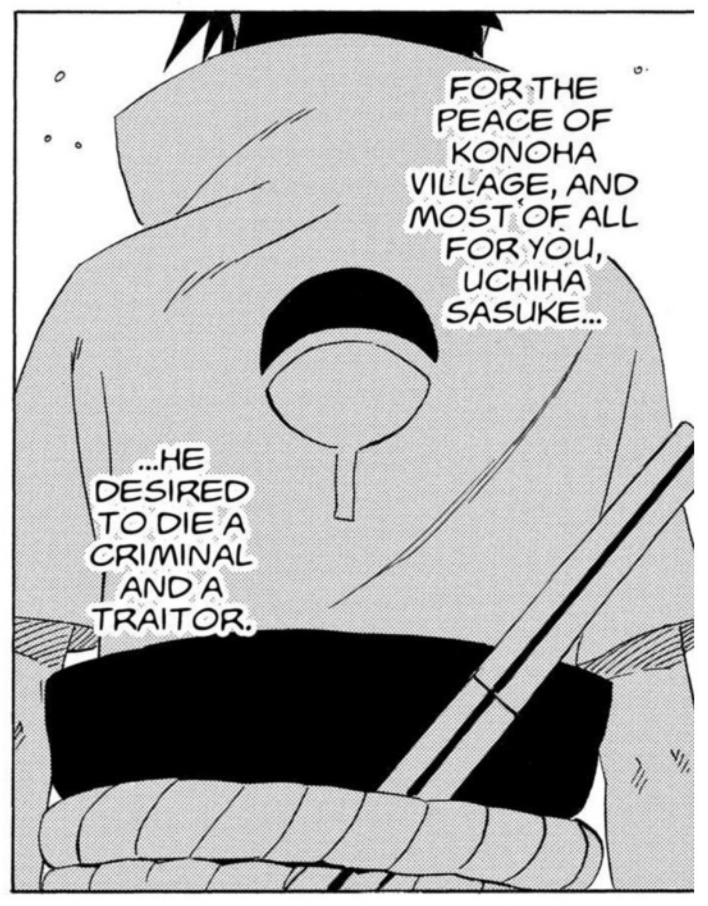
BECAUSE HE HAD TO FIGHT YOU...

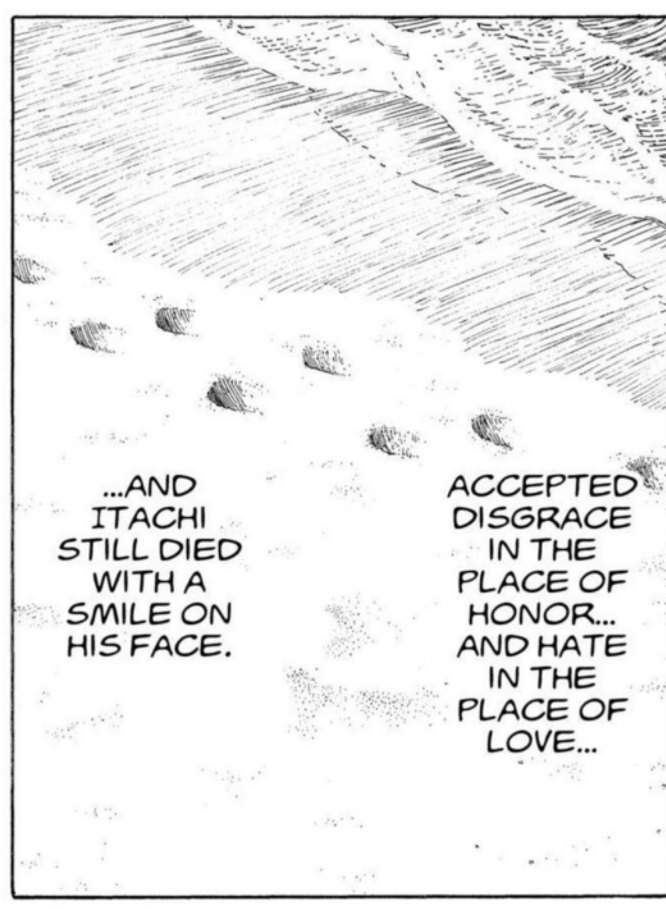
...AND DIE IN FRONT OF YOU.



KAVOOSH

SPLOOSH


FOR THE PEACE OF KONOHA VILLAGE, AND MOST OF ALL FOR YOU, UCHIHA SASUKE...
...HE DESIRED TO DIE A CRIMINAL AND A TRAITOR.


ACCEPTED DISGRACE IN THE PLACE OF HONOR... AND HATE IN THE PLACE OF LOVE...
...AND ITACHI STILL DIED WITH A SMILE ON HIS FACE.



SWOOSH...

HE BE-QUEATHED TO YOU THE UCHIHA NAME...

...STILL FOOLING YOU TO THE VERY END...


NARUTO

Number 402: Final Words









!
BADUMP BADUMP BADUMP
BIG BROTHER!
WEL-COME HOME!
WHOOMPH
HEY! LET'S GO PLAY, BIG BROTHER!
OKAY? WHAT SHOULD WE PLAY?
SASUKE! YOUR BROTHER HAS ACADEMY HOMEWORK TO DO.
FSH...
YOU NEED TO WAIT UNTIL HE'S FINISHED DOING ALL OF IT.
HMPH


READ
THIS
WAY


IT'S ALL RIGHT. I'LL DO MY HOMEWORK LATER... BESIDES, IT'S EASY...
HEH HEH...

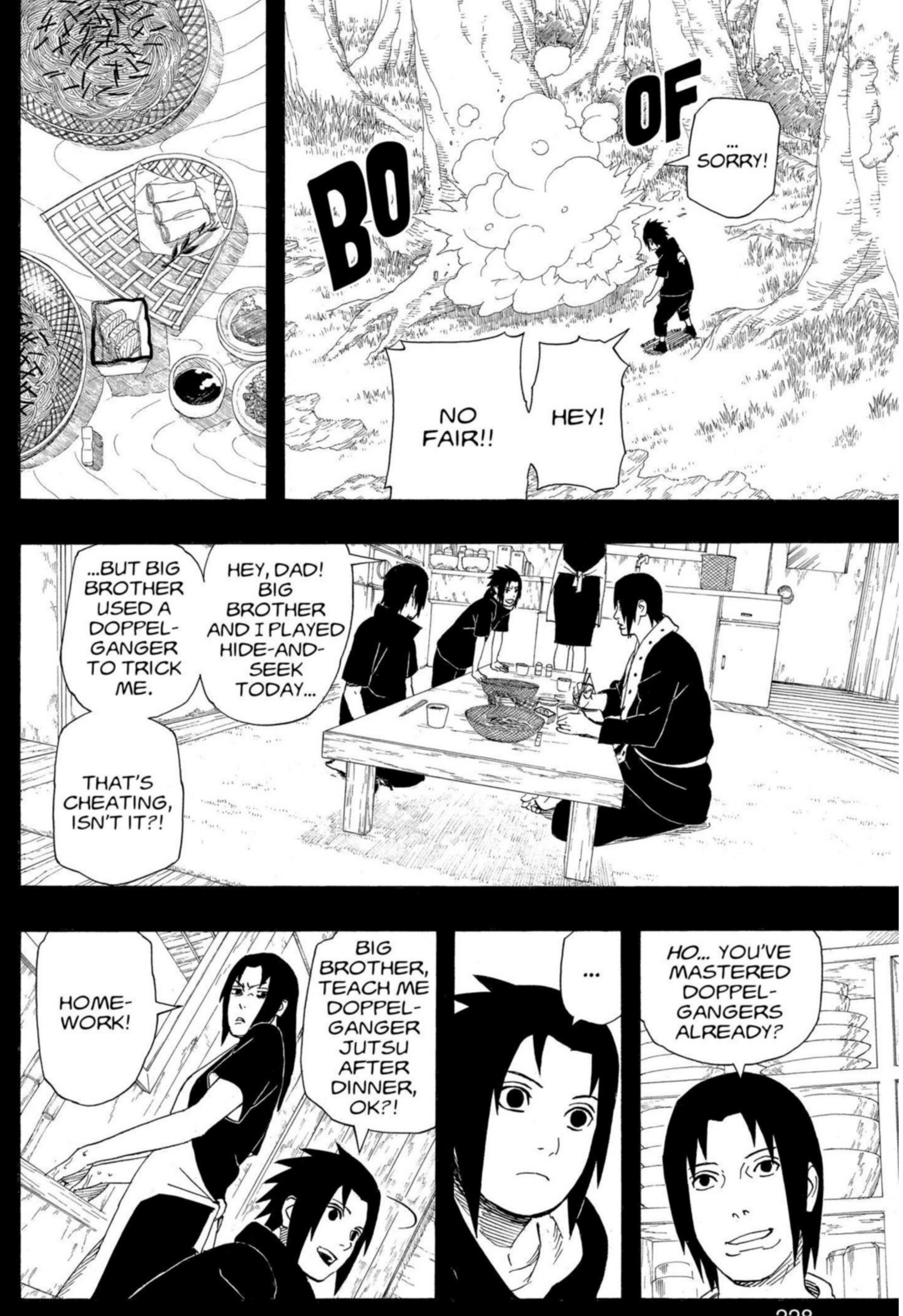

VWEET
VWEET
I WONDER WHERE HE HID?


!




FOUND YOU!
!
SHUP


GOOD TRY, SASUKE.
BUT...
FWP



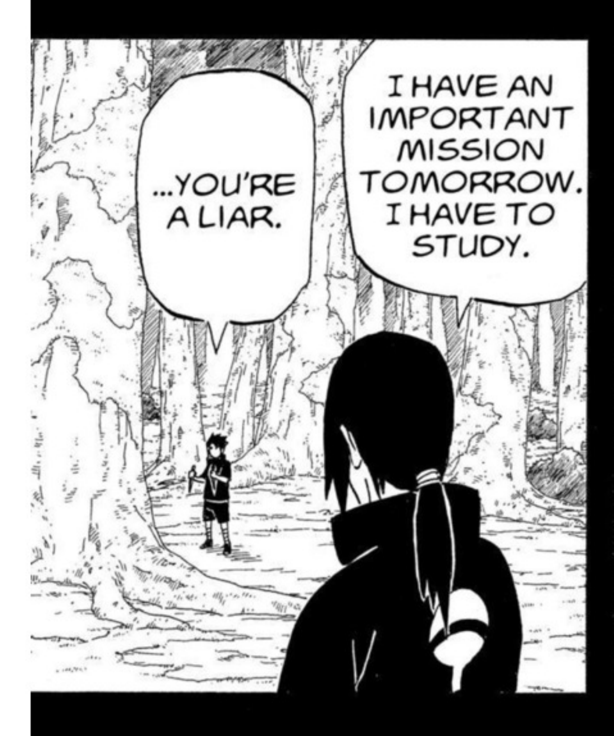
BO
OF
... SORRY!
HEY!
NO FAIR!!
HEY, DAD! BIG BROTHER AND I PLAYED HIDE-AND-SEEK TODAY...
...BUT BIG BROTHER USED A DOPPEL-GANGER TO TRICK ME.
THAT'S CHEATING, ISN'T IT?!
HO... YOU'VE MASTERED DOPPEL-GANGERS ALREADY?
...
BIG BROTHER, TEACH ME DOPPEL-GANGER JUTSU AFTER DINNER, OK?!
HOME-WORK!


FLUMP
ARGH ...


SORRY, SASUKE.
AN-OTHER TIME.
TOK

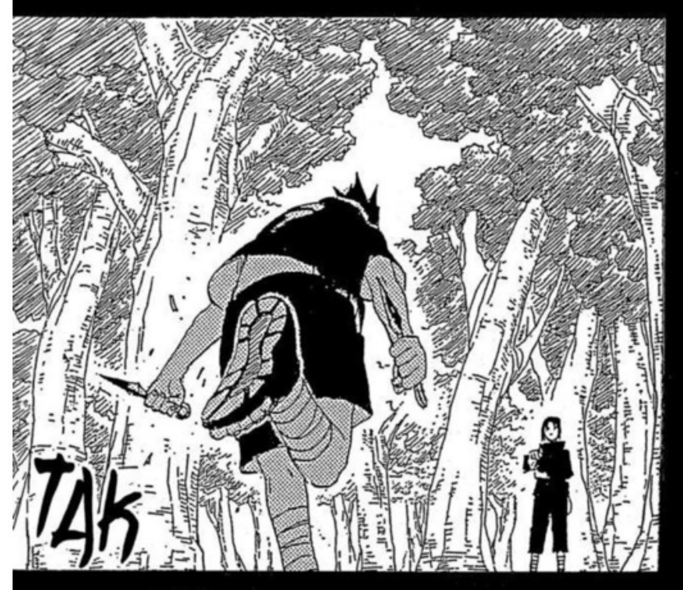

SASUKE, WE HAVE TO GO.


YOU PROMISED TO TEACH ME NEW SHURIKEN TECHNIQUES!


I HAVE AN IMPORTANT MISSION TOMORROW. I HAVE TO STUDY.
...YOU'RE A LIAR.


CH
CH


!
NMF


TAK

SORRY, SASUKE.
ANOTHER TIME.
TOK
OW!












READ THIS WAY

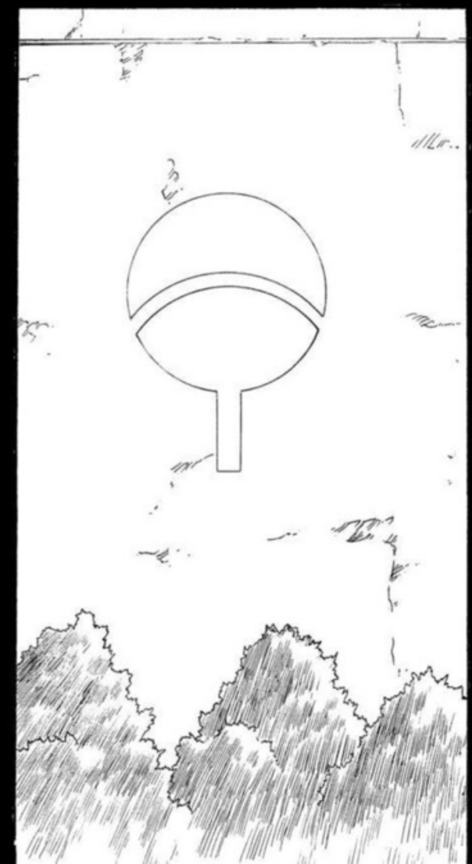

WILL YOU TRAIN WITH ME AGAIN, BIG BROTHER?
SURE...


...BUT I'M GOING TO START GETTING ASSIGNED MISSIONS...
...AND YOU START THE NINJA ACADEMY TOMORROW, DON'T YOU?
WE'RE NOT GOING TO HAVE AS MUCH TIME TO OUR-SELVES ANYMORE.


...


THAT'S OKAY...


...AS LONG AS WE CAN STILL TRAIN JUST US ONCE IN A WHILE.




IT'S JUST THE TWO OF US.
I'LL ALWAYS BE THERE LIKE A WALL YOU NEED TO CLIMB OVER.




BIG BROTHER ...




HELP ME WITH MY SHURIKEN JUTSU TODAY, PLEASE...
...
I'M BUSY... WHY DON'T YOU ASK FATHER?

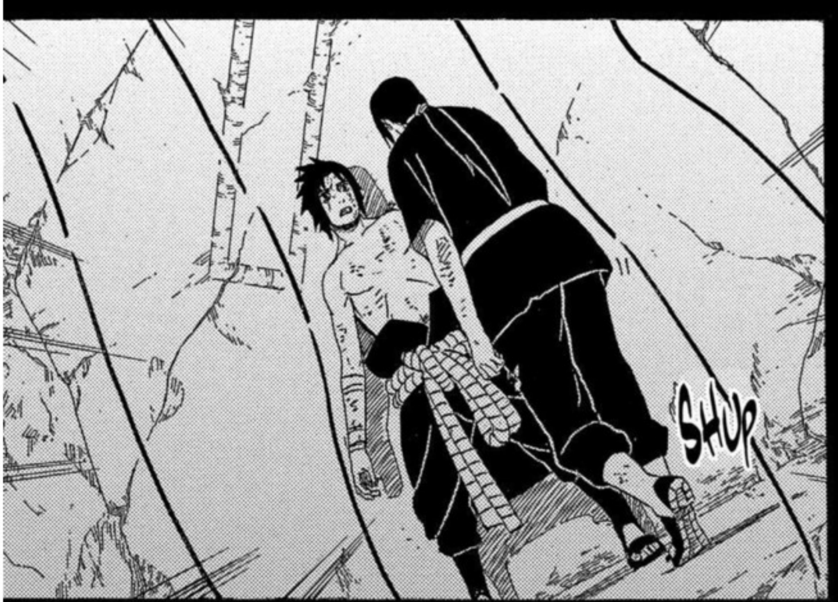

BUT YOU'RE BETTER AT SHURIKEN JUTSU...
EVEN I CAN TELL THAT.
...WHY DO YOU ALWAYS TREAT ME LIKE SUCH A PEST?
CH CH
...
TROT TROT

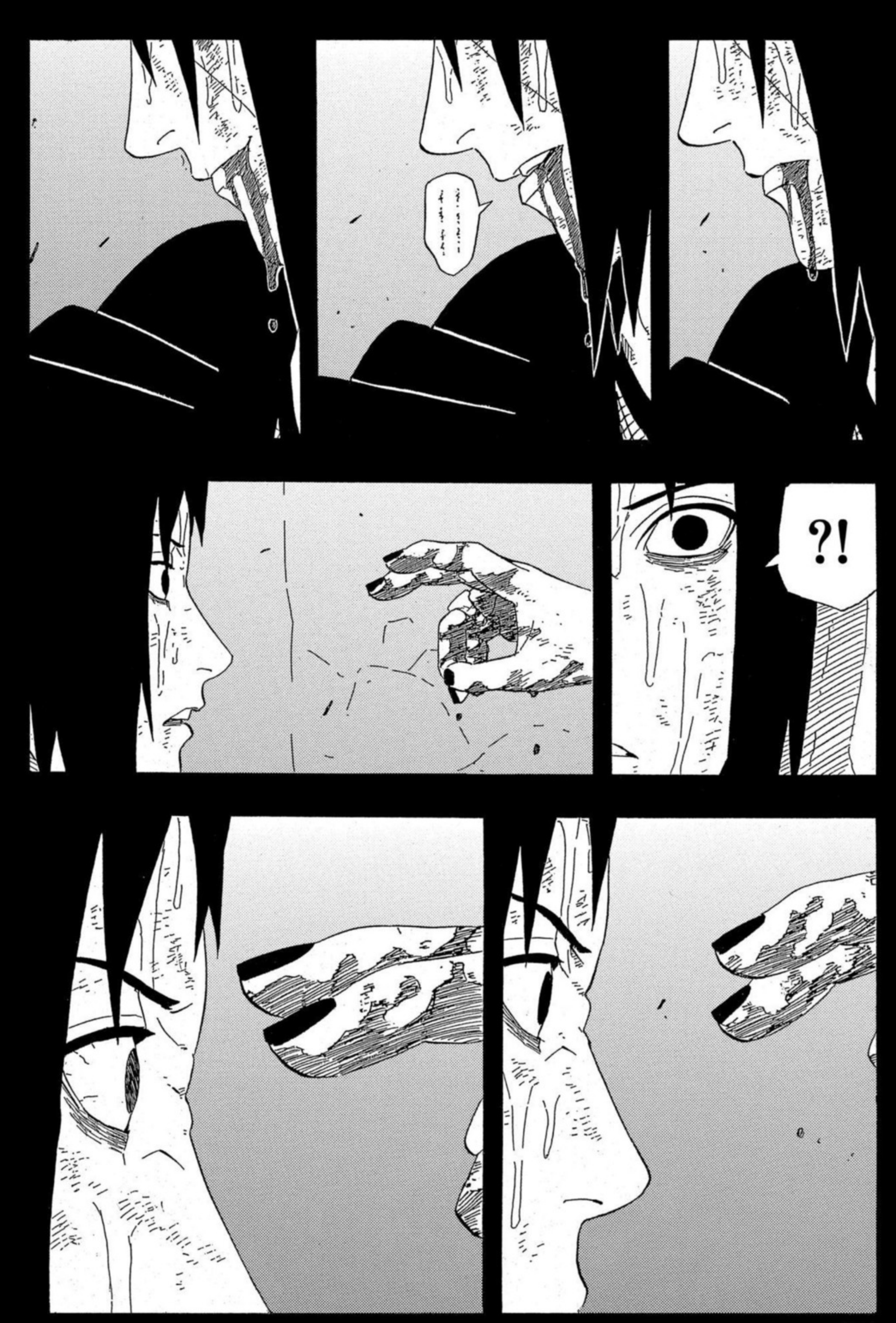
TOK
SORRY, SASUKE.
ANOTHER TIME.
OW!

I'LL ALWAYS BE THERE...

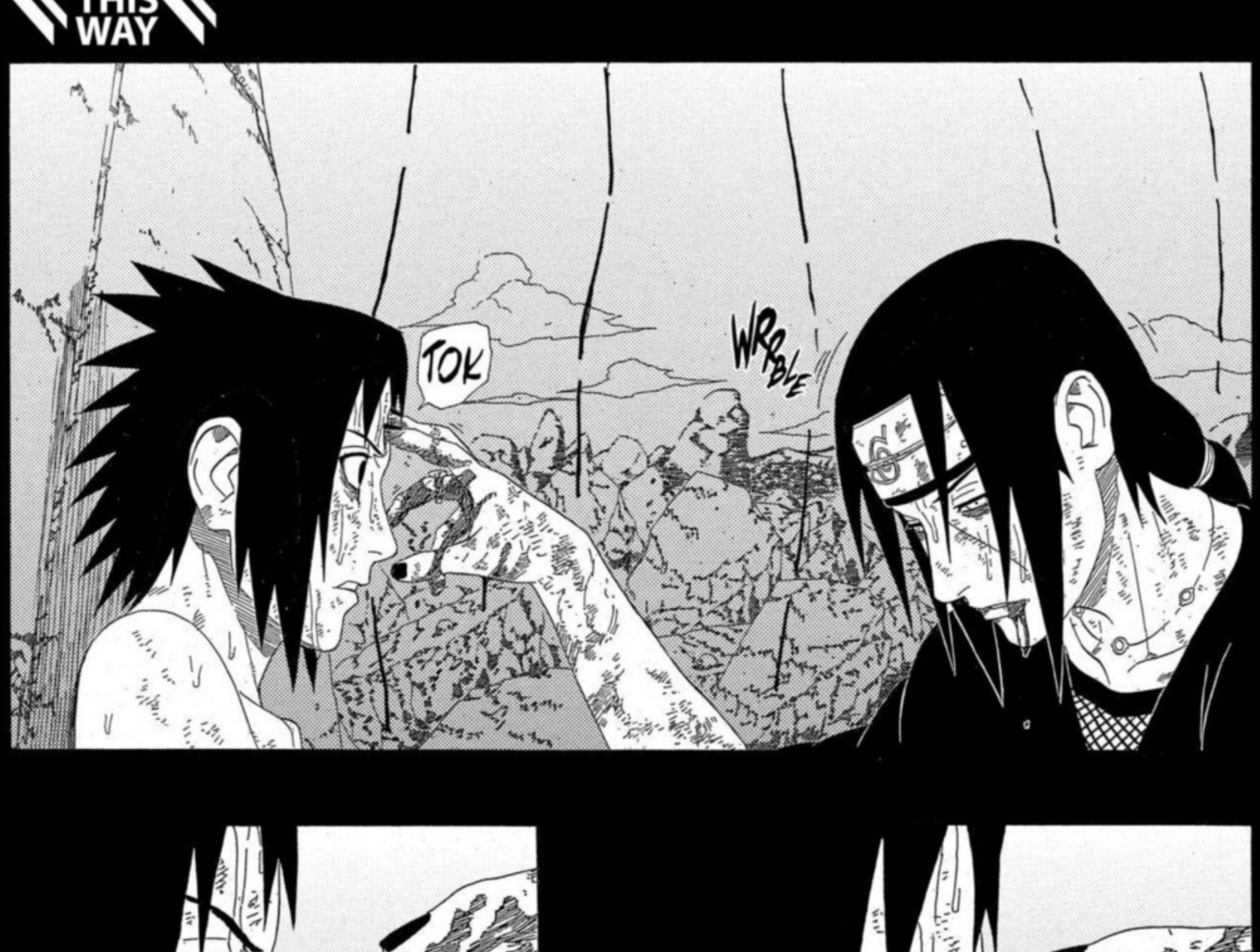




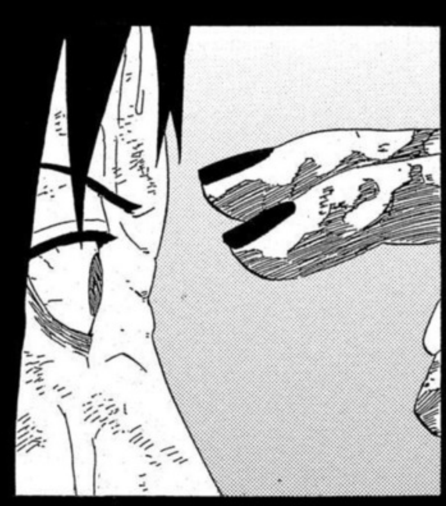




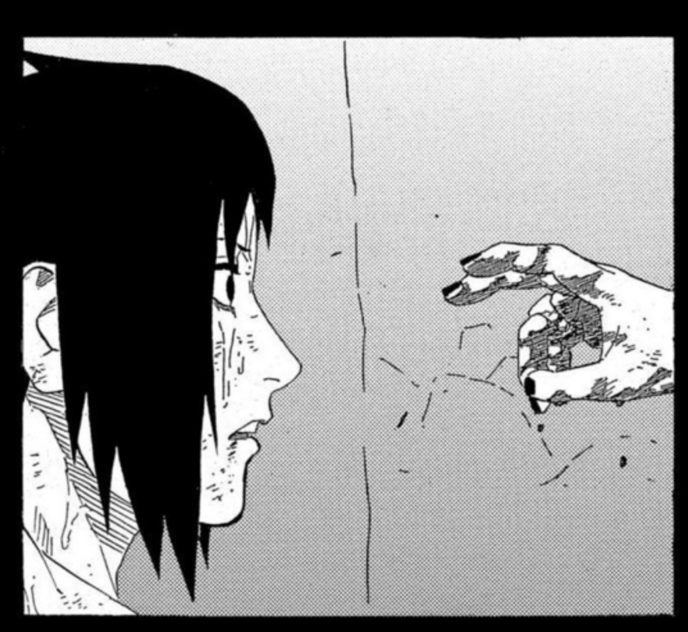

READ
THIS
WAY

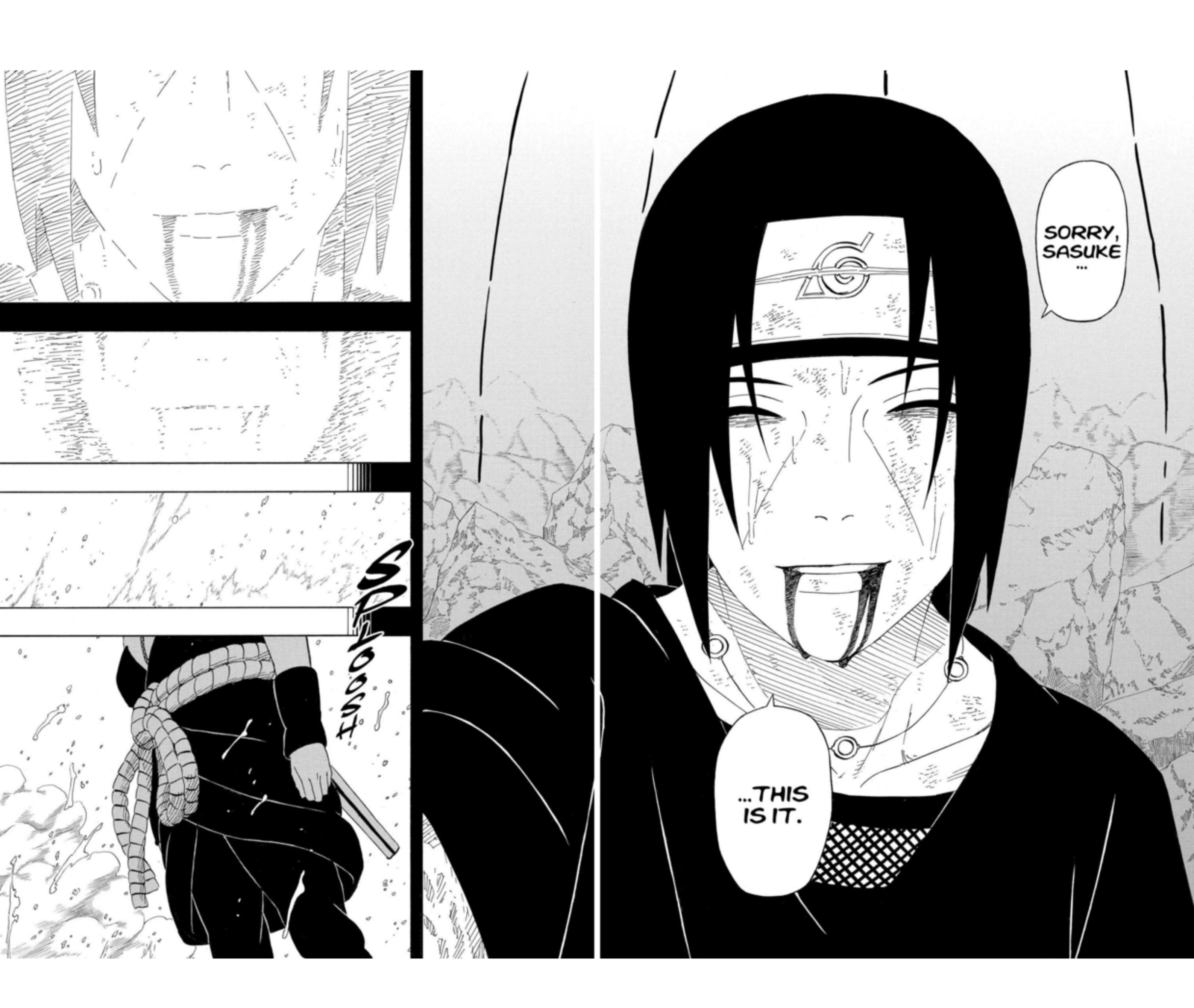

WRBBLE
TOK



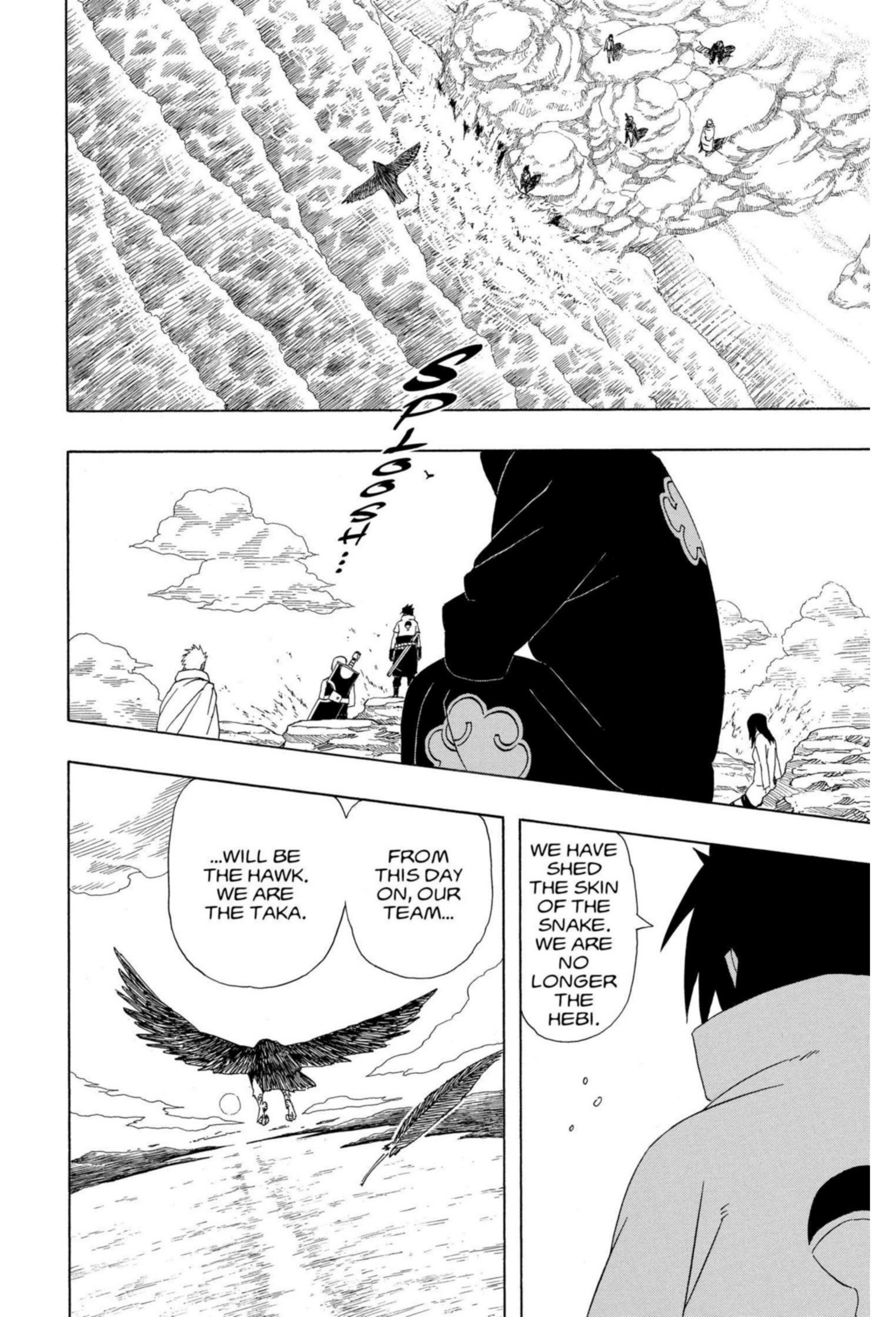




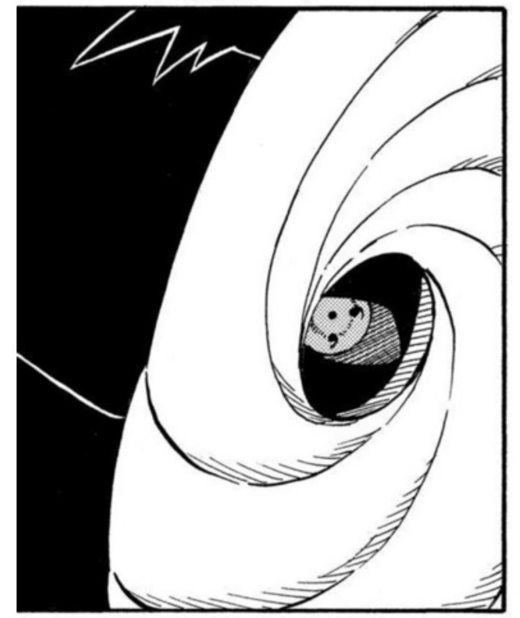

?!


SORRY, SASUKE ...
...THIS IS IT.
SPLOOSH


FWOOSH
KREEE!
READ THIS WAY


SPLOOSH...
FROM THIS DAY ON, OUR TEAM...
...WILL BE THE HAWK. WE ARE THE TAKA.
WE HAVE SHED THE SKIN OF THE SNAKE. WE ARE NO LONGER THE HEBI.







...TO DESTROY KONOHA!